



THE CHRISTMAS GUEST.

7682

A

COLLECTION OF STORIES.

BY

MRS. EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH;

AND HER SISTER,

MRS. FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had rolled,
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honor to the holy night;
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas eve the hymns were sung;
Forth to the wood the merry men go,
To gather in the mistletoe.
All hailed, in uncontrolled delight,
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as to the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down."—WALTER SCOTT.



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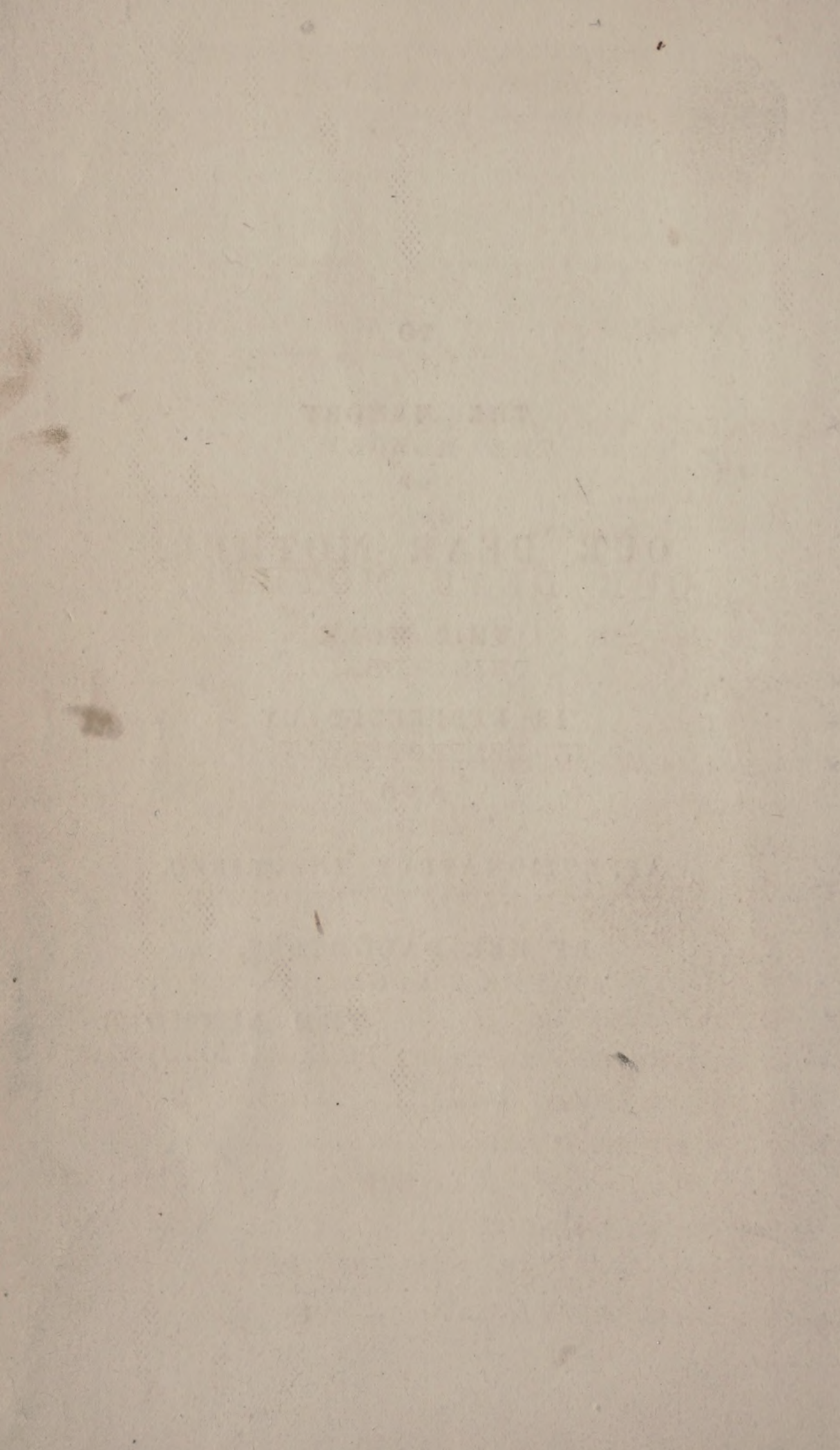
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TO
THE MEMORY
OF
OUR DEAR MOTHER,
THIS WORK
IS RESPECTFULLY
AND
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,
BY HER DAUGHTERS,
THE AUTHORS.



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THE CRIME AND THE CURSE.

A LEGEND OF ST. MARY'S.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

Other sins only speak ; murder shrieks out.
The element of water moistens the earth,
But blood flies upward and bedews the Heavens.—WEBSTER.
A curse will follow them like the black plague,
Tracking thy footsteps ever, day and night,
Morning and eve, summer and winter—ever !—PROCTOR.

CHAPTER I.

A TALE TOLD BY NIGHT.

Listen, gentle stranger, now—
Awful hands have marked thy brow.—ANON.

I MUST take you some way back both in time and space—even to the old country and to the days of Charles the Second, for so far off dates the legend.

One of the most beautiful among the celebrated beauties of the sinful court of that “Merry Monarch” was the lovely Lady Berenice Beauchamp. She was the only child of Lord Beauchamp, of Beauchamp, in Blankshire.

But the estate was a male feoff and, on the death of the lord, would descend to his nephew, Bertram Beauchamp, the son of his younger brother.

And thus the lovely Lady Berenice was likely to be left with only such scant dower as her father might be able to save out of his income from his rent-roll, and as he was a fast living, fox-hunting, horse-racing old lord, this was but too likely to be very limited.

Under these circumstances, it seemed desirable, if not even absolutely necessary, that the Lady Berenice should contract a wealthy alliance.

With this view, Lord Beauchamp took his daughter up to London, and presented her at court; where her marvellous beauty made such a deep impression upon the susceptible fancy of the fickle monarch that all the great court ladies grew green with envy.

It was said that Nell Gwyn wept, and the Duchess of Cleveland swore; but the injured Queen Catherine of Braganza, who had nothing left to lose, laughed at the discomfiture of her insolent rivals, and rather smiled upon the lovely young aspirant for court favor.

But neither the tears of one favorite, nor the oaths of the other produced the slightest effect upon the selfish and obstinate monarch. In defiance of them, Lady Berenice was appointed maid of honor to Queen Catherine, as the usual first step in promotion to that bad eminence sighed for by all the unprincipled beauties of that most unprincipled court, and attained, it must be admitted, by too many of them.

But in a position where neither principles nor policy could have saved her, since she seems to have possessed not the one nor the other, pride and passion were her preservers; for the Lady Berenice was very proud and very impassioned; and very soon, also, she was in love—and *not* with the be-wigged and bloated monarch or his state.

Among the officers of the queen's household was a young gentleman of noble family, but of impoverished fortunes. His name was Veyne Vandeliere.

Sir Veyne—like every other man about the court, from the king down to the king's humblest guardsman—fell in love with the beautiful Lady Berenice, and his passion was returned. Those were not the days and that was not the

school of duty and self-denial. The loveliest lady and the handsomest cavalier of that gay court were enamored of each other; they were secretly engaged to be married; some said they really *were* married; others that they only *ought* to have been.

However that was, their loves met the strongest sort of opposition, not only from the lady's father who bitterly disapproved of her favored suitor, and whose darling wish it was to see his daughter wedded to some powerful nobleman or wealthy gentleman, and would not therefore tolerate the idea of her becoming the wife of the handsome, but needy, young adventurer,—but, also, from the enamored and jealous monarch who, being passionately in love with the beauty himself and anxious to elevate her to all the powers and privileges of that bad “eminence” spoken of before, could not endure the existence of a rival.

Opposition from one alone the lady might have withstood; but with the power of the king arrayed against her on the one side, and the authority of her father on the other, what could even Berenice Beauchamp do?

Being then but eighteen years of age, she could do nothing but remonstrate, and finding that of no avail, set her little teeth and bide her time.

It came. And Berenice Beauchamp at twenty-eight, was another sort of woman, as you shall presently hear.

About this time Philip Calvert, brother of the then late Lord Proprietary of Maryland, was fitting out an expedition to go and settle the affairs of that province, which had been much disturbed by the revolution in England, and which was not quite set in order by the restoration.

Many of the impoverished members of the Catholic nobility and gentry were preparing to go out with him, and seek their fortunes in the New World.

The king, anxious to get rid of his young and handsome

rival, first dismissed Sir Veyne from his office in the queen's household, and then gave him an appointment of great honor and emolument in the new administration of the government in Maryland.

So Veyne Vandeliere sailed with Philip Calvert and his party, and in due course became a great naval commander in the little colony.

But the crafty king gained nothing by his motion. The haughty and vindictive beauty never forgave her sovereign for separating her from her lover. And she never appreciated the honor of the royal notice—or rather more probably she estimated it at its true worth.

But it injured her matrimonial prospects very considerably for a long period of time. The lovely lady Berenico Beauchamp hung on hand. Few courtiers were willing to risk their monarch's displeasure by suing for the hand of a beauty upon whom *he* had cast his royal glance.

At length in despair her father took her home to Blankshire, where in the course of a few months, he married her to the Earl of Henniker, an ancient peer of incredible wealth, honors, and decrepitude! And then—having attained the object of his whole life's scheming, Lord Beauchamp died, and his title and estates passed to his nephew.

Lady Henniker, dragging her decrepit but doting old husband after her, went back to court, where she was soon appointed lady in waiting upon the queen, and where her beauty, splendor and extravagance, made her more notorious and more powerful than she had been before.

But in the midst of all this royal magnificence, her poor old lord died suddenly, and some said *not fairly*, and *his* titles and estates also went to a distant relative, who was his next male heir.

Whether the old man died the death of nature, which was extremely probable, considering his age and infirmities,

or the death of domestic treachery, which was also not unlikely, considering the after conduct of his lady, is now as impossible to tell, as whether Queen Mary Stuart really did blow up Henry, Lord Darnley, or not.

Be that as it may, the beautiful young widow, turning all her rich dowry of land into ready money, and taking with her her young daughter, the only offspring of her mercenary marriage, embarked on board the first outward-bound ship for the province of Maryland, and went out to join her lover.

She had not seen nor heard from him for ten years ; but in all the chances and changes of those years, she had not forgotten him, or ceased to love him. With all her well-known faults, she had that fidelity ; with all her imputed crimes, she had that constancy.

And down to this late day, all her daughters resemble her in the possession of that one rare gift. They love but once, and they love forever.

But to get back to her story. In due time, she landed at St. Mary's. She became a guest of the Lord Proprietary, until she could settle herself. But—she neither saw nor heard anything of her lover. She did not even hear whether he were married or single, living or dead, until desperate with anxiety she put the direct question.

Then to her consternation she learned that he had gone on an expedition against the pirates that infested the Chesapeake, and the neighboring waters, but to her consolation that he was still unmarried. While waiting in great anxiety for the return of her lover, she having received a grant of that large tract of land comprising the peninsular that to this day bears her name, left her little daughter in the care of the Lord Proprietary's lady, and went to survey her manor.

She found an unbroken forest, bounded on both sides by

water ; otherwise, a large, wooded point of land extending far out into the bay, with a creek running up on one side of it.

She named the peninsular Henniker's Point, and the inlet Henniker's Creek. And with the vast means she had at command she brought workmen and building materials from all the settlements far and near wherever they could be found, employing some half dozen coasting vessels in the business, and she cleared a portion of her manor, laid out handsome grounds, planted orchards, vineyards and gardens, and erected the most magnificent house in the colony—all for the sake of her absent lover.

She had commenced her improvements very early in the spring. It was the work of many months, even for the strong force of laborers her large means and extravagant wages had brought together.

Thus it was late in the autumn before her fine house was finished, and furnished and made habitable. On the first of December of that year, she moved into it. About the middle of the same month, Captain Sir Veyne Vandeliere returned into port, having captured a pirate ship, and brought in several prisoners and a large amount of booty. A courier from the Lord Proprietary brought her this news.

She wrote to her lover as to an old friend ; told him of her determination to live a lady of the manor in the new province, and described to him the beautiful home she had made, and ended by inviting him to come down and see it, and spend Christmas with her.

This letter she sent by a special messenger mounted on a stout horse ; for you must remember that there were no regularly organized post-offices and mail routes here at that early date. In four or five days her messenger returned with her lover's answer.

He wrote in a friendly and affectionate, rather than in an

ardent and enthusiastic spirit. He expressed great pleasure at the prospect of her residence in the colony; he thanked her for her kindness in inviting him to her house; he told her that he knew the neighborhood well, having had much dealings with a certain friendly tribe of Indians, the Pocomocoos, whose village lay some little distance above her manor on the coast, and that he should gladly accept her invitation.

CHAPTER II.

A DARK RESOLVE.

There where I had garnered up my heart;
Where either I must live or bear no life;
The fountain from which all my current runs,
Or else dries up!—To be discarded thence!—SHAKESPEARE.

Vengeance to God alone belongs,
But when I think on all my wrongs
My blood is liquid then!—SCOTT.

SUMPTUOUS you may imagine, were the preparations made by the lady of the manor to receive the long lost lover of her youth. Some curious old family accounts are still extant to give us some ideas of the costliness of the entertainment.

Her butler went in person to St. Mary's City to purchase foreign sweetmeats, fruits, nuts, wines and other exotic delicacies that had just been brought in by a ship from the old world. And at the end of a fortnight, he returned with a wagon load of the rarest table luxuries.

The forest furnished birds and venison, and the sea, fish and oysters. And the well-stocked farm-yard, and dairy, provided every thing else.

And now, all things being in readiness, the lady waited very impatiently for her lover.

He came on Christmas Eve. We may fancy how she, who had loved so long and so ardently, through every vicissitude of fortune, who had abandoned friends and country and civilization, for his sake, who had braved the perils of a long and most perilous voyage, only to join him, the lover of her girlhood, whom she had not seen for ten long weary years—we may fancy I say, how she received him—with what joy, what agitation, even with what incoherency of thought and speech and action!

He, on his part, as the story goes, was calm and cold and courteous. He thanked her again for her kindness in asking him to her house, expressed the pleasure he felt in seeing her; and inquired after old friends that they had known in the mother country.

The lady was disappointed, and wounded at his want of enthusiasm on this occasion, so full of emotion to her; but she ascribed his manner to a little lingering jealousy, and resentment of her own marriage. And she thought soon to set him right by an explanation of the whole affair.

They supped alone together, and spent the evening in talking of the old days at court; but they talked as long severed acquaintances, and not as re-united lovers. The lady was more and more disappointed and wounded.

At length she spoke of her marriage with the old earl, telling him how she was forced into it; how she had given her hand only, and not her heart to the aged valetudinarian; how her heart had never changed, and how, as soon as she was free, she had not waited for her years of mourning to expire before she had sold everything, and come out in search of her early love.

In reply, he begged that she would not think it necessary to explain or apologize for that really prudent marriage which she had a perfect right to contract. It was well and wisely formed, he said; and he commended the discretion with which she had acted in the whole affair.

Still wounded and disappointed, the lady said no more, but soon after rang for the wax tapers, and telling her cool lover that the servant would show him his room when he should feel disposed to retire, bade him good night, and went away to her own chamber. But it is reported that, instead of going to bed, she paced the floor through the whole night, for that her confidential maid heard her footsteps and her sighs.

The next day was Christmas-day, and by all accounts a duller one for them was never passed. There was no other company in the house, and even the little Lady Berenice, a maiden of some six or seven summers, was banished from the drawing-room and dining-room, lest her appearance, as the child of Lady Henniker's mercenary marriage, might awaken unpleasant reminiscences in the mind of that lady's once discarded lover.

The two dined alone together, waited on only by the old butler. They talked of the opening prospects of the province, under the new order of things; of the state of the old country—petticoat governed, through the passions of the weak and unprincipled king; of the rise and fall of state ministers or of royal favorites; of the court gossip about the declining star of that arrogant and violent Duchess of Cleveland, and the ascending sun of the beautiful French maid of honor, Louise de Queroualle.

They talked in short of anything and everything but their own affairs, of anybody and everybody but themselves. Sir Veyne sedulously avoided personal subjects and kept to general topics. To her mortification and sorrow Lady Henniker soon perceived that this was done on purpose. So at length rising from the table, with a grave courtesy, she begged him to enjoy himself, and left him to his wine.

The story goes that she returned to the drawing-room, and standing before the great pier glass that filled up the

space in the wall between the two front windows, she turned the two side lights full upon it, and gazing at the reflection of her own magnificent person, took an inventory of her own beauty. It is said that she was heard to murmur:

“I am handsomer now than I was then—much handsomer. My form is fuller, my complexion richer, my eyes larger and more brilliant, my hair darker and more glossy; and my heart, how much more ardent. I am young too. Only twenty-eight. Women much older than I am have governed the nations through their beauty. Cleopatra was thirty-eight when Marc Anthony lost for her the world. Anne Boleyn was over thirty when King Henry sacrificed his conjugal and religious faith to her. Jane Seymour was no younger when she supplanted Queen Anne. And Madame de Maintenon was past forty when she fascinated and married the most fastidious monarch in the world. And I, at twenty-eight, with my beauty unimpaired, and even much improved—if I cannot win back my old love—the only man I care for, or ever did care for, or will care for in this world—aye, if I cannot win him back!—if I cannot win him back! I will know the *woman* why! For the reason will be a woman. And she had better keep out of my way.”

This is what is reported to have been muttered, at intervals, in broken phrases by the countess as she gazed upon her image in the glass, or paced up and down her drawing-room floor; heedless or unconscious of the presence of her servants, passing in and out to draw the curtains, trim the candles, or replenish the fire.

But she was much too impatient and exacting to leave her guest long to the enjoyment of his own company. Catching sight at length of the old butler who had entered the room upon some pretext, she told him to serve coffee there, and then to go and let Sir Veyne know that it was waiting.

The old man did his errand, and the guest came at the lady's bidding. He was cheerful, courteous, and conversable as before; but he still persistently avoided the most distant approach to love-making, to sentiment of any sort, or to the slightest reminiscences of the past. And this second evening of his visit closed on the countess, leaving her more miserable than before.

"*There is a woman in it!*" she is reported to have muttered to herself as she retired to her sleepless bed—"there is a woman in it; but it shall go hard if I do not win him away from her! Hard! yes hard with me, but infinitely harder with her! hard enough to crush her—to crush her—to GRIND her out of existence!"

So with a face livid with passion, her fists clenched, and her teeth grating together as she would have ground the flesh of the imaginary victim between them, the evil woman spoke of her unknown rival.

"For he is mine!" she hissed, "mine by an older right! and mine he shall continue, in spite of men, women, and devils! For 'old coals are soon kindled,' and, old love soon revived."

The lady was right; "old coals are soon kindled;" but if the coals have burned to ashes, no art on earth can ever make them fire again. It was so with Lady Henniker's lost lover. The coals of his love for her had burned to ashes, and no art of hers could rekindle them.

CHAPTER III.

A REVELATION AND A RESOLUTION.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma or a hideous dream.—SHAKESPEARE.

SIR VEYNE remained with Lady Henniker for six weeks. Probably he would not have staid so long, had she not soon changed her tactics. She let his bug-bear, the recollection of their earlier relations, pass out of sight. She avoided everything like a desire to recall them. She brought down her daughter, the little Lady Berenice, and presented her to Sir Veyne, saying, as she did so, that she lived now only for that dear child's sake. And she assumed towards him a gay, frank, and friendly demeanor well calculated to put him off his guard.

Without seeming to do so, she tried to win him by her own peerless attractions, by her extreme beauty, enhanced by the most exquisite taste in dress, her ineffable grace perfected by cultivation, her assumed amiability, her elegant accomplishments, her brilliant conversational powers, her excellent judgment, her sparkling wit.

She seemed to succeed in charming him to the spot. At all events, at her often repeated invitation, he staid on and on. Week followed week and still he staid. It would seem likely to have been a dull time, but that the winter was an exceedingly mild one; the river and the bay remained open, and the guest spent much of his time in fishing and in field sports.

He would frequently be absent all day; sometimes all night also, and on such occasions he would tell her that he had been beguiled into following the game for a long distance, and being overtaken by darkness had sought shelter

in some friendly Indian's wigwam, or pioneer hunter's cabin. This was the account he would give his hostess, and she would be satisfied with it.

But all the out-door servants knew—what they dared not breathe to their mistress—that these fishing and hunting expeditions almost always ended at an Indian village, some ten miles up the coast, where the remnant of the warlike but friendly tribe of Pocomocoes still gathered around their council fires.

The time drew near for Sir Veyne's departure. So well had the Lady Henniker controlled herself and acted her part, that she had completely deceived her quondam lover in respect to her sentiments; he believed her to be a kind friend who wished him well; but wished to be nothing nearer to him; and regarding her in this agreeable light, and having besides a confidence to repose in her and a favor to ask of her, his manner warmed to the lady very much.

This naturally in its turn deceived her. It led her on to believe that at last her love, her constancy, and her endeavors to please him, were about to be rewarded with his hand.

So she was not very much surprised when one morning, a few days before his intended departure, Sir Veyne asked her for a private interview—an almost needless request, for all their interviews were necessarily private since there were no other persons in the house except the little Lady Berenice and the servants, and these were seldom in the way. On this occasion, however, the child happened to be present.

So the lady sent the little girl out of the room and then signed to her guest to approach and sit near her. Sir Veyne gladly obeyed. And then and there, while the lady's passionate heart was throbbing fast with love and joy, and eagerly expecting the fruition of ten weary years'

hope deferred—then and there he told her a tale likely to turn all her love to loathing, her joy to anguish, and her hope to the darkest despair.

He told her that he had a wife and child in that immediate neighborhood—an unacknowledged wife and child, whom he implored *her*, as his good friend, to befriend and cherish, until such times as he could publicly present her at the Provincial Court.

The countess must have been a woman of unequaled presence of mind, self-control and fortitude. She uttered no cry of agony, though the shaft had sped through her heart. She expressed no surprise, though she was nearly overwhelmed with astonishment. She simply moved her chair a little, so as to bring her back against the lighted window, and throw her face into deep shadow, and then in a sweet, cool, calm voice she begged him to go on.

When she had first invited him to come down to spend Christmas at her house, and he had accepted her invitation, he had told her that he was well acquainted with the neighborhood of her manor. He reminded her of the circumstance now; and she said that she remembered it. Then he proceeded to explain.

He told her that some eighteen months before, he had come down on a hunting expedition with some friends from St. Mary's City. That in a single handed encounter with a stag at bay, he had been severely wounded, and that his companions had carried him to the Indian village of Pocomoco, and left him to be taken care of by the skillful medicine men of the tribe.

His wounds confined him to his pallet of skins in the wigwam of the chief for several weeks, during which time he was kindly treated by all the tribe, and most tenderly nursed by the beautiful child of his host.

"The old story," here put in the countess, not bitterly or

ironically as it seemed, for she spoke in the same sweet, cool, calm tone ; and he could not see the expression of her face, which she carefully kept concealed in the deep shadow.

“The old story.”

“Yes, my lady, the old story, with a variation, however, that I hope will meet your approval,” Sir Veyne is said to have answered, and then he proceeded.

He told her how this maiden, whose pretty Indian name meant in our language the Shining Star, was as lovely, as graceful, and as good and gifted as was the princess Pocohontas when she won the heart of the gallant young English officer, Captain Rolfe. He said he soon learned to love her, and before he left the Indian village he married the Indian maiden according to the simple rites of her tribe.

“And by no other ?” slowly and distinctly inquired Lady Henniker.

“By no other rites,” frankly answered the narrator.

“Then it was no marriage at all,” observed the lady ; and the slightest possible tone of relief made itself manifest in her voice.

“It was a marriage as holy, as sacred, and as binding, as if the Archbishop of Canterbury had issued the license in his own hand, and read the ritual in his own voice. More binding on my heart and conscience it could not possibly be,” replied the loyal lover.

“Proceed,” replied the lady sweetly.

And Sir Veyne went on to relate that when he had taken a temporary leave of his bride he hurried to St. Mary’s City where his professional duties awaited him ; that he was immediately sent on an expedition against the buccaneers of the bay, which kept him at sea for many months, that soon after his victorious return he received Lady Henniker’s invitation to pass Christmas at Henniker House, and, leaving

all the lionizing fêtes offered him at St. Mary's City, he had accepted her proffered hospitality and come down.

"*Pour cause*," put in the lady.

"Yes madam, *pour cause*," admitted the gentleman, with a smile.

And then he confessed that in addition to his wish to see his old friend, another reason of his coming down the country was his ardent desire to visit his young Indian wife. Under cover of a fishing excursion, he said, he went to the Indian village to see her. She met him in joyful surprise, and placed in his arms a beautiful boy, some few weeks old then.

"*Mongrel brat!*" burst, in lowly-muttered thunder from the lady's lips.

"Madam?" inquired the gentleman.

"*Conjugal, that!*" replied the lady.

"Oh, yes—I misunderstood you—yes, it was—very much so!" laughed the gentleman.

"And now, what do you wish me to do in this affair?" inquired the countess.

"Do?—A very great favor that I have scarcely the courage to ask: to receive my simple Indian wife here, and to keep her here while I go to St. Mary's City and bring back a confidential friend—a clergyman—to marry us according to the rites of the Church. You will do this great kindness?" he inquired.

"Do it?—Oh, yes; I will do it. Certainly, I will do it," answered the lady, in very sweet tones.

"And when may I bring her?" pursued Sir Veyne.

"Let me see: you go on Monday, I think?"

"Yes," he answered.

"And this is Thursday. Bring her to-morrow, Friday. The weather is cold. You can take my close carriage for the purpose. And I will have a little feast prepared to do her honor when she comes," said the countess, calmly.

"A thousand thanks—oh, ten thousand thanks, most noble friend!" fervently exclaimed Sir Veyne, catching and kissing her hand. But he felt it cold as ice in his clasp, and he cried out in compunction:

"I have kept you too long from the fire—sitting near the frosty window, too! You are chilled through—you are half-frozen! Come away."

"Yes, I am cold—excuse me," she said.

And she arose, and left the drawing-room, and hurried to her bed-chamber, where she was overheard walking up and down the floor, and raving to this effect:

"For the passion of a summer, this madman will sacrifice the ambition of his life and the happiness of mine. He shall not do it. He shall be saved. It is but the passion of a summer. Another year and he will loathe her—the little brute beast of an Indian squaw. Oh, yes, I will receive her!—so hospitably, she shall never leave me again. Oh, yes, I will feast her!—so well, that she shall never hunger nor thirst more! Oh, yes, I will assist at her marriage ceremony!—with a bridegroom so fond, so loving, that he shall never, never, never release her from the fold of his embrace."

Not long did the lady absent herself from her lost lover. She composed her spirits, washed her face, and dressed her hair; put on her most becoming robes, arrayed her countenance in the most alluring smiles, and went down to join Sir Veyne at dinner. And never had she been so gracious, so cheerful and so charming before. She even observed that Sir Veyne seemed to open his eyes and to look at her in a new light; and that as his look lingered long and almost fondly on her face, he seemed to sigh as if he half-regretted his mad marriage with the Indian maiden.

Be that as it might have been, the next morning, Sir Veyne—accommodated with the close carriage, and driven

by the old coachman of Henniker House—went away to fetch home his wife.

And the Countess of Henniker, in feverish excitement, set all her household to work to prepare for the fête for the reception of her old lover's Indian bride.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEED AND THE DOOM.

Beyond the infinite and boundless reach
Of mercy, if thou didst this deed of death,
Art thou damn'd.—SHAKESPEARE.

TRADITION has brought us down some account of the reception of the Indian bride by the lady of the manor.

The sun was just setting behind the wooded hills on the western horizon when the close carriage containing Sir Veyne, his "Shining Star," and her infant boy, entered the grounds of Henniker.

The lady, with her little girl in her hand and attended by her principal servants, came out of her house and down the first flight of the terrace stairs to welcome her guests.

She shook hands again with Sir Veyne; and, when he presented his young wife, she took the beautiful creature in her arms, kissed her on both cheeks, and then held her off at arms' length and gazed upon her form and face in wonder and involuntary admiration.

And well she might, if the legend tells the truth. The lady no longer wondered at the magic spell that had made the high-born, haughty Veyne Vandeliere forget his pride of caste and country, and unite himself with this Indian maid.

Sir Veyne had said that the "Shining Star" was as pret-

ty as Pocahontas when that little princess first won the heart of the gallant Captain Rolfe. He scarcely did her justice. It was not of the gentle daughter of Powhatan that the "Shining Star" reminded the beholder. She more naturally recalled the image of that magnificent queen, Anacoana, cacique of Xaraguay, whose majestic beauty and royal graces, whose wisdom, courtesy and magnanimity, had combined to fire and subdue the souls of the proudest and most courtly among the Spanish chieftains who had accompanied Columbus in his later voyages to Hispaniola. Tall and slender, yet well rounded and graceful in form; delicate and regular in feature; with a clear, pure, soft brown complexion warming into a richer tint upon the cheeks and lips; with long jet black hair, reaching far below her waist, and large, long-lashed dark eyes that could flash like a falcon's or dream like a dove's, with an ineffable grace in every glance and motion—such was the "Shining Star," on the evening of her presentation to Lady Henniker.

Her very dress has come down to us, traditionally. It was a picturesque and becoming compromise between civilized and savage costume—a close-fitting black velvet bodice and a short scarlet skirt, both richly embroidered with gold—black hose and scarlet boots. Her head was bare of any covering beside the long black hair which was braided with pearl and gold.

In personal beauty, dignity and grace, I have compared her to the great queen Anacoana. The resemblance did not cease there. In the treachery of her pretended friend and in the tragedy of her fate, she was also like that magnanimous but ill-starred princess.

No shadow of the coming sorrow was on her face, however, as she returned the embrace of her hostess and suffered herself to be led up into the house of her mortal foe. Not the "fatal entrance of Duncan, under the battlements" of

Macbeth's castle, was more fatal to the royal guest than was this visit to the Indian princess.

The hostess, treacherous as Macbeth's wife, herself attended her guest to a bed-chamber, where every comfort and convenience of civilized and refined life awaited her. Rich dresses and jewels were displayed as wedding offerings to the young Indian wife. With a dignity and grace wonderful in one of her birth and habits, she thanked the lady for these presents, but declined to change the dress she wore and which she said had been commended by her husband. But she begged to see her boy.

The babe had been given in charge of one of the female domestics of the house, and now at his mother's desire he was brought to her. Proudly and fondly the "Shining Star," placed the infant in the arms of the lady, feeling, ah! too sure of her sympathy. It is said that the lady caressed and fondled the child to such a degree that she won the confidence and affection of the mother at the very onset. Nor did she give over dandling him until the second dinner-bell summoned her and her guests to the table. It was a sumptuous entertainment—the board blazed with gold and Sevres china and Bohemian glass, and "groaned," as the phrase goes, under its burden of native and of foreign delicacies and luxuries.

Lady Henniker, splendidly arrayed in a crimson velvet train, white satin robe, ostrich plumes and diamonds, presided at the feast. Opposite to her sat Sir Veyne in full evening dress, and by his side sat the "Shining Star."

Ah, it was a dinner of death! a Barmacides' feast, that! The old butler, assisted by two footmen, waited—the butler standing behind his lady's chair, the footmen standing each behind the guests. All seemed "merry as a marriage bell." The hostess and her guests laughed and jested without restraint.

And when the cloth was removed and the dessert and the wines placed upon the table, their hilarity increased—it knew no bounds.

“I fill to the health of the beautiful bride!” said Lady Henniker, rising in her place. There was a jewelled golden goblet, an heirloom in the family, that had been set before the young Indian guest, as if to do her honor. A waiting footman filled it with sparkling wine, while his companion performed the same service for her husband.

“Let us drink philopena said the innocent Indian wife—“let us drink the way you taught me in my wigwam.” She spoke in her pretty broken English, and it is certain the lady did not understand her—it is most certain from what followed. “Let us drink philopena,” she persisted, holding up her rich goblet.

With a most loving glance he smiled assent, and in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, the heads were close together, with each an arm around the other’s neck, so that her jewelled goblet she held to his lips, while he held his to hers.

“Stop,” shrieked the hostess, starting to her feet and dashing down her own glass; “stop on your life, Sir Veyne.”

It was too late. He had half drained the goblet. When it dropped from his hands he fell back, convulsed and speechless. The poison was sharp and sudden, meant to do its deadly work effectually.

The Indian wife sprang to her feet in mortal terror. The hostess ran from her place to the assistance of the dying man. The servants stood around in horror and affright.

“Ride—ride swiftly to the Indian village and bring their medicine men here. They are the only doctors in reach,” cried the lady, in an agony of distress. And the terrified servants rushed out of the room to go upon that errand.

"Veyne! Veyne! speak to me! speak! You didn't drink it *all*. You *can* not die," she shrieked, wringing her hands and bending over the victim.

"He rallied for a moment, struggled and spoke, but not to her. Turning his dying eyes upon his dear wife—"Darling, the death was destined for you. Thank heaven it has fallen on me instead," he said, and fell back—DEAD. The countess bent over him in an agony of remorse and grief. She chafed his rigid hands and kissed his cold lips, and called on him by every endearing epithet to awake, to speak to her and to live.

Vain, of course, were all her efforts. Finding them so, she turned furiously upon the Indian widow, who all this time had sat at her dead husband's feet, with her head covered and bowed in the patient despair of her race.

"*You* did it; you, you hound!" she fiercely shrieked, shaking her hand at the prostrate figure. "*You* put the poisoned goblet to his lips and killed him. *You* did it, and you shall hang. You shall hang like a dog for this deed."

And more infuriated still, either by the anguish of her own regrets, or by the mute patience of that prostrate creature, she snatched the covering from the widow's head, and seizing and dragging her to her feet, shook her fiercely, as a lioness might shake her prey.

But the Indian princess was brave and resolute as she was self-possessed and patient. She was more than a match for the lady. Catching Lady Henniker's hands, she mastered her with a single effort, and holding her at arms' length, pointed to the dead, and said—but in the broken music of her imperfect speech that I can not pretend to render literally:—"You have slain the noblest brave your God ever made. You have slain him treacherously at your own feast—in the sacred bread and wine. You have wid-

owed me in my hour of love, and joy, and trust." Then raising her arm and face on high, with an awful majesty in her look and gesture, she continued: "And may the Great Spirit of my fathers visit this treachery upon you and your daughters. May the curse of widowhood fall upon them in their youth, and make them as desolate as you have made me."

Then flinging the form of the lady from her, she turned and kneeled again by the dead body of her husband.

But the lady, as soon as she was released, stamped furiously and called aloud:

"My servants out there! Help! help!"

Every man and woman left in the house came rushing into the room.

"Arrest that murderess! She has poisoned Sir Veyne!" she cried.

But the "Shining Star" drew herself up, lifted her head, stretched out her arm, and looked at them with a glance and gesture so full of majesty, that the boldest among the serving-men recoiled before her.

"Seize her! seize the poisoner!" shrieked the lady, stamping her feet.

The men came on to obey their mistress. But the "Shining Star" was as strong as she was brave and patient. She threw them off one after another with an ease that scarcely disturbed her calm despair.

"Knock her on the head! knock her down, I say! Throw yourselves upon her all at once! And bind her with cords where she is! She is but a dog of an Indian, and she is a murderess and a poisoner!" screamed and stamped the phrenzied lady.

Oh, shame of womanhood! Oh, deeper shame of manhood! The men obeyed their mistress's order. They threw themselves *en masse* upon the heroic woman. They

threw her down, bound her hand and foot with cords that cut into her flesh, and then they stood around her panting and palpitating form, awaiting further instructions.

“Take her now up into one of the unfurnished rooms of the attic, and lock her in there without fire, mind you—without fire, food, or bedclothes. It is a freezing night; it may cool her blood a little,” said the lady.

Her cruel mandate was obeyed.

“And now,” inquired the countess, “have the messengers I directed to go to the Indian village set out yet?”

Her servants went to ascertain, and returned with the news that the messengers had not yet started; but that they were saddling the horses, and would be gone in a few minutes.

“Then stop them. It is of no use for them to get the medicine men now. Stop them, and tell them to prepare to set out to-night to St. Mary’s City and tell the sheriff’s officers what has happened, and bring them here to take this criminal off our hands.”

Again the men obeyed. And that same night the countess wrote a letter addressed to the Governor of the Province, who was her friend, and she sent it by her messengers to St. Mary’s City.

And the dead body of Sir Veyne was laid in state in the drawing room, and his widow was kept a prisoner in the attic to await the arrival of the officers.

In the interim the lady, overwhelmed with grief, horror and remorse, kept her own chamber, whence she issued her orders, which were generally held to be as immutable as the oft quoted laws of the Medes and Persians.

Her strict seclusion, however, gave an opportunity to the old butler who had the custody of her prisoner, to show some humanity to the hapless creature. He dared not, it is true, give her bedding or fire, lest the lady should chance

to visit the prison, and find out these contraband comforts; but he took her nourishing food and drink, which, however, the bereaved widow and captive princess could scarcely touch.

And in the dead of night, when the countess was supposed to have retired to rest, the compassionate butler would prevail on the terrified nurse to let him take the little infant to his imprisoned mother that she might suckle him. And this was the only consolation the wretched Indian woman had in her captivity.

A week passed away in this manner. It took at least that time, in the state of the roads and the limited conveniences of travel, for the messengers to go and return from St. Mary's City. The lady in her secluded chamber was aging so fast, that every day seemed years as it passed over her. The captive in the attic was wasting away in uncomplaining despair. The child in the nursery was pining for want of its mother's tender care. And the body in the drawing-room, cold though the weather was, began to need burial.

At length a long procession of officers and men from St. Mary's City, arrived, and their reception broke up, in some degree, the breathless horror of the time. As the coroner was among them, the closed drawing-room was opened, aired and fumigated, and an inquest was held on the body.

The Countess was the first and chief witness called. As she entered the room, clothed in the deepest mourning, her long black velvet train, borne by two pages also in deep mourning, her appearance is said to have struck all present with the profoundest awe. Those who had known her a few weeks before would scarcely have recognized her now. They had seen her last, a beautiful and happy woman of twenty-eight; they saw her now suddenly aged, as if a half century had passed over her.

She bowed her haughty head with stately grace to the officers of the law, and advanced to take her stand. But a dozen gentlemen sprang hastily forward, and the two foremost of them placed an easy chair and a footstool, as the coroner begged her to be seated while giving in her testimony.

This testimony was to the effect that the Indian wife of Sir Veyne Vandeliere, called in her native tongue the "Shining Star," while at the dinner with him, had put her arm around the neck of her husband, and placed a goblet of wine to his lips, of which he drank, and presently after—died. The old butler and the two footmen, called in turn to the witness stand, corroborated this testimony. They told the literal, lying facts. The young wife *had* placed the poisoned goblet to her husband's lips, and he *had* drank of it and died. But who stealthily put the subtle poison in the bottom of the goblet before the wine was poured? And for whom was the draught intended? The coroner's jury never stopped to inquire. They were no wiser than their successors are now. Besides, there was a deeply-rooted prejudice against the Indian race. It took but little time on this occasion for the jury to find a verdict to the effect that Captain, Sir Veyne Vandeliere, had come to his death from the effect of poison administered by the hands of his reputed wife, an Indian woman known by the name of the "Shining Star." A warrant was issued against her in accordance with this verdict.

The officers of the law remained a day and night at Henniker, and on the succeeding morning prepared to depart and carry their prisoner with them, in irons, to St. Mary's city. At first she was fettered hands and feet; but finally it was found necessary to release her hands that she might nurse her infant, which she was permitted to take with her.

It is said, that as she came forth from the house, with her baby pressed to her bosom, walking slowly because of her fettered ancles, guarded by armed officers, every beholder was struck with admiration at her beauty, and at the patience and dignity of her sorrow. Not Queen Zenobia, led in chains to Rome, even showed more of majesty in despair. She was placed in a close carriage, furnished by Lady Henniker for the purpose, and so she was taken away from Henniker House never to return thither. They were to travel day and night.

In the darkness of the night that followed, while passing through a deep forest, the cavalcade were surprised by a party of her tribe, who made a desperate effort to rescue their princess. A short but bloody struggle ensued. Several of the constables were wounded. But more than three times that number of savages were killed before they were finally beaten off, as of course they were bound to be; for what could a handful of poor Indians, almost without weapons, do against a constabulary force armed to the teeth?

The "Shining Star" was taken safely to St. Mary's City, and lodged in jail to await her trial. It came on quickly enough. Lady Henniker and her servants were summoned to attend court as witnesses. And upon their testimony, given no doubt by the servants in good faith, the innocent Indian widow was convicted of poisoning her husband and condemned to expiate the crime on the scaffold. It is said that she bore her sentence with the courage, patience and dignity that had distinguished her throughout her trial. She spoke no word, but only bent and kissed the babe that lay upon her bosom. She was taken back to jail to await the day of death.

Her father, the chief of the Pocomoco, braved all danger of arrest for his share in the attack upon the cavalcade, and came to St. Mary's City to treat for the ransom of his

daughter. He offered the wealth of all his tribe; but, of course, in vain. He was made to understand that in any criminal case ransom was impossible. Then he asked permission to see his daughter, and that was granted to him, under certain restrictions. He saw her in her prison cell and in the presence of a turnkey. In this interview there was more of fortitude than tenderness exhibited by both. She told him she was guiltless and also who was guilty. The chieftain bade his child be brave and meet death as became his daughter, seeing that she was doomed to die. But he also swore by the graves of his fathers that she should not die the death of shame. He bade her farther to fear nothing, but to trust to him to save her from that ignominy. And so he left her.

The turnkey, as in duty bound, reported the conversation to the warden of the prison, who afterwards consulted with the sheriff. In their united wisdom, they came to the conclusion that the chief intended, by some secret means, to convey some subtle poison or a deadly weapon to his daughter's hands, and save her from the ignominy of a public execution. And great precautions were taken to prevent his fancied purpose being carried into effect. All her food and drink were sent her from the warden's private table. No one was permitted to pass into her presence without a previous examination. Two female warders took turns in guarding her, both day and night. She was never left alone for an instant.

At length, the day of execution came. Vast was the crowd assembled to see the Indian princess die. A strong detachment of soldiers formed a hollow square around the scaffold to guard it against any possible attempt for the rescue of the condemned. Strongly guarded also, at the appointed hour, she issued from the prison, pressing her young infant to her bosom. Walking with the same state-

ly step, wearing the same calm air of dignity and patience, she passed through the hooting crowd, and ascended to the scaffold.

There were ecclesiastics there who tendered her now, for the last time, the often proffered—always rejected—offices of their Church. They urged her now to forgive her enemies, and to seek forgiveness for herself, before it should be forever too late. But, with the pride of a pagan priestess, she waived them aside. With matchless dignity, she replied:

“The Great Spirit alone has power to pardon or to punish. I have spoken to Him, and He has heard me.”

And she bent her head and pressed a kiss upon her nursing infant's brow, and whispered to one compassionate officer there:

“Let me keep the child till the last minute comes, and then you take him from me, and send him to my tribe, according to your word.”

And he bowed the promise he could not otherwise utter.

The fatal moment had then arrived. The cap was in the hands of one assistant, the noose in those of another. The hangman stood with his foot near the spring of the trap. The sheriff held the white handkerchief, the dropping of which was to be the signal for the execution. But—none of these ignominies were destined to degrade the person of the chieftain's daughter. For just as the compassionate officer took the infant from her arms—her arms which another assistant swiftly seized to bind—an arrow sped from a distant bow, cleft the air, whizzed over the heads of the crowd and passed the officers on the platform and buried its point deeply in the brave and loving heart of the Indian princess.

Her father had kept his word. His daughter died by his hand.”

CHAPTER V.

HOW THE CURSE WORKED.

Hear thou and hope not, if by word or deed,
Yea by invisible thought, unuttered wish,
Thou hast been ministrant to this horrid act;
With full collected force of malediction
I do pronounce upon thy soul, despair.—MATURIN.

A curse will follow them like the black plague,
Tracking thy footsteps ever, day and night,
Morning and eve, summer and winter—ever!—PROCTOR.

AND did this modern “Roman father,” did this Red Virginus escape after doing this deed?

Yes; for there was no legal evidence against him. Every one seemed morally sure that he had done the deed, but no one could prove it upon him. The sending of that shaft so swiftly and surely home to its mark, just at the last crisis, was a feat of archery that no one in the country but the Eagle Eye was capable of performing; but no one saw him do it. His Indian subtlety had eluded all vigilance in the completion of his purpose, and afterwards all investigation into it, and thus he went unpursued by the law. He lived, it is said, to a great old age; lived to hand down the tradition of his daughter’s wrongs to his grandchildren, and to his great-grandchildren, and to charge them as a sacred duty with the execution of her curse from generation to generation.

The child was taken home by the compassionate officer to whom he had been confided by his unhappy mother. He would have been taken by him to her tribe, but for a circumstance that took the whole settlement by surprise.

A lawyer, who had been absent in Jamestown during all these proceedings, returned to St. Mary’s City soon after the death of “Shining Star.” He had been the solicitor of the deceased Sir Veyne. He produced a will, that had

been executed by that great naval commander, just before he sailed against the pirates of the bay. This will had been made as a sure provision for his wife and child, in the not improbable event of the commander's death in battle or by shipwreck. In making this will he acknowledged as his wife, the Indian woman who was known by the name of the "Shining Star," and who was the young daughter of the Eagle Eye, the great chief of the Pocomocoes, and he devised to her and to her expected issue the whole of his considerable property; and he appointed a priest of great piety, executor of his will, and guardian of his child or children as the case might turn out.

And so, of course, the boy inherited the whole estate, and under such circumstances, was not given up to his mother's tribe.

He grew up to manhood, married and left the neighborhood with his wife. They were supposed to have gone to the far South, or Southwest, but since their departure from St. Mary's, tradition has lost sight of them and their race.

As for the wicked woman, her life became the hell that she had made it. She was one whose every emotion was a passion, and whose every passion was a burning and consuming fire. Her life-long love had been a fire; and now her remorse was a fiercer fire. She shrivelled from that hour of her awful guilt; she shrivelled as one scorched up and consumed by inward fever; she withered—some said under the influence of intense sorrow for the murdered friend of her youth; some said from remorse for her horrible crimes; and others from the blighting power of the Indian woman's curse. She withered—and yet she could not die.

Gray-haired and wrinkled and bent with age, before she had seen thirty years, she retired to Henniker and nevermore reappeared in society. She became very devout and

passed her life in prayer and penance. She built the church and station of St. Rosalie, and richly endowed them both. She did many good works besides, and gained in the province the reputation of a saint.

And her daughter, the little Lady Berenice, was placed in the strict convent of the Carmelites, then lately established in the province. She was doomed by her mother, as another offering for that mother's sin, to take the veil, so that her large inheritance should go to endow the new convent.

But she did not become a nun. When she arrived at woman's estate she took her destiny in her own hands and decided it for herself.

She must have had a strong will of her own, inherited, doubtless from her mother. And there is a funny story told of her flight from the Carmelite convent. The site of the Carmelite convent was selected for the superior salubrity of its air.

For the same reason, salubrity, a society of priests founded a boys' college in the same neighborhood. These two establishments—the convent school for girls and the Catholic college for boys—were among the first and best institutions of learning in the province.

The two buildings were far enough apart, and had no sort of connection. But the grounds of both were very extensive, and they were contiguous—the south boundary of the convent grounds and the north boundary of the college grounds running closely parallel, with only the high-road between them.

In the convent-school, young ladies of the first rank in the province were placed for education. In the Catholic college, young gentlemen of the like rank were received. These boys and girls who frequently met in holiday times in their own home circles in St. Mary's City were never, of course, permitted to hold any sort of conversation during

their school terms; but when they were exercising in their respective grounds, they sometimes saw each other.

Among the pupils in the convent-school, as I said before, was the little Lady Berenice Henniker. And among the students in the Catholic college was Benedict Calvert, a young relative of the Lord Proprietary. A wild young blade, by all accounts, he was; the only son of a widowed mother, rich, spoiled, self-willed, reckless, unmanageable, but withal not vicious or wicked. At the discreet age of seventeen he imagined himself desperately in love with Lady Berenice, then a discreet damsel of fifteen.

He paid his addresses to her by flinging apples, oranges, and other contraband articles over into the convent grounds for her consumption. Sometimes these missiles fell on the road between the two grounds; sometimes they were so well aimed as to light in the lap of the lady for whom they were intended. And once or twice, alack, they struck some reverend sister between the shoulders or on the breast!

Whenever the young fellow was found out in these follies, he was severely reprimanded and threatened with expulsion.

This went on, however, for two or three years. Meanwhile, Lady Berenice had been advised by her mother of her destiny to the veil. As she never left the convent except to go to Henniker, where she found even a stricter rule of life, she was naturally very weary of restraint and very anxious for liberty.

One day freedom came to her very unexpectedly. She was now wearing the white veil of the novice, and her special duty on this day was the oversight of the children, who were out in the grounds taking their usual exercise.

Presently her lover, who was out on a half day's leave, came riding down the road. When he had reached a rising ground, he saw Lady Berenice and her young charges in the convent grounds. The horse he rode was a powerful

hunter, who could carry the heaviest man in the country, and take a five-barred fence with a broad ditch on the other side of it as easily as a kitten could jump over a stick. And the low brick wall of the convent grounds was a trifle in comparison.

Young Benedict Calvert acted on impulse, I do believe. Seeing in reality his sweetheart in the white veil of the novice, seeing in imagination the black veil of the nun that would soon replace it and hide her from the world and from his sight forever, he took a sudden and a desperate resolution. He put his hunter to the wall, cleared it with a bound, and galloped straight up to the group of girls, who scattered in all directions, leaving Lady Berenice standing alone.

“One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,”—

You know the rest—in a word, he lifted her up behind him, told her to put her arms around his waist, and hold tight, and not be afraid but to trust to him and his hunter; he galloped away towards the wall, cleared it with another bound, and dashed along the highway to the amazement and consternation of all the passers by.

It is said they had raced at least five miles before the little lady recovered from her astonishment and regained her powers of speech sufficiently to exclaim:

“What are you about? Where are you carrying me? Don’t you know that this is a sacrilege, and they will excommunicate me?”

“That’s just what I want ’em to do,” answered the young scrapegrace, “for in that case you never can be a nun, you know.”

“Oh, but they’ll shut me up.”

“When they catch you. But never fear. Trust to me and my horse. He is warranted to carry double, and to outrun anything on four legs that can be sent after him.

Still, if you insist upon it, you know, I will carry you back to the convent," added the scamp, mischievously.

"I'd rather die," answered the young lady.

"All right," he replied. And on they scampered, over the highway, to the terror of all travellers, who quickly got out of their way for a pair of lunatics. At nightfall he reached his mother's country house, where he was not only lord and master, but idol and despot.

Knowing his mother to be absent at the time, he bullied the female servants into supplying his companion with a proper travelling dress. And after they had had supper they set out, with fresh horses, for the then new city of Annapolis, where they arrived late at the close of the week, and where they were married by an Episcopal clergyman.

They were minors, but that did not make any more difference in the Province of Maryland then, than it does in the State of Maryland now. Population was the main want of the colony, and the chief object of the political economists. Early marriages were encouraged. Minors might marry legally without the consent of parents or guardians, then as now.

After the mad marriage he took her to his mother's house in St. Mary's City. The lady immediately went into hysterics; but presently came out of them all right, and forgave her son and received her daughter-in-law. Being a Protestant, she was not so much scandalized by the feat of her hopeful son as a good Catholic must have been. Lady Henniker never forgave her daughter, or acknowledged her son-in-law. How could she, when they were both excommunicated by the church. But she bowed her stricken head lower than before, was heard to say that the Indian woman's curse was working, and never afterwards mentioned the matter.

The curse did work, or seem to do so. Most people

prophesied that no good could ever come of such a sacrilegious marriage. And very little good came of it in fact. Within a few months after that marriage, while they were all staying at their country house, the young husband went out to hunt, and he never came back. When days had passed, and diligent search had been made, his dead body was found in the woods with an arrow sticking through his heart.

Some said it was the judgment of Heaven upon his unholy marriage. Others affirmed that it was the vengeance of Eagle Eye, the lonely old chief of the Pocomocoes, carrying out his daughter's curse. The Lady Berenice considered it the punishment of her sin in leaving her convent. She was overwhelmed with grief and remorse. She became almost as great a penitent and devotee as her mother was. She humbled herself before the church she had offended; and after a long time, she was forgiven, and received back into its communion. She took her infant daughter, a posthumous child born some weeks after its father's death, whom she called Magdalene, in memory of her own repentance, and she went down to Henniker and joined her lady mother.

There the two women led a recluse life, devoting themselves to prayer, penance, alms-giving, and lastly to the education of the little Magdalene Calvert. In their zeal they would have devoted this child also to a convent, but she was a member of the Lord Proprietary's family, though a distant one, and she was the heiress of a very large estate; so both the Orphan's Court and the powerful Calvert clan had a great deal to do with her destiny. They would not permit her to be placed in a convent. Nevertheless she was brought up very strictly by her educators.

This sweet Maiden grew up as amiable and intellectual as she was beautiful. That gentleman of her deceased

father's family, who had been appointed as one of her guardians by the decision of the Orphan's Court, as a check upon the fanaticisms of her mother's family, would not consent that she would be doomed to take the veil. This being the case, her mother did the next best thing she could. She educated her daughter with the greatest strictness of discipline, told her of the malediction that justly or unjustly followed her family; and so she ever shadowed that young life with superstitious gloom.

However, when Maidlen was twenty years of age, and within a year of her majority, when she would come into the actual possession of her large estates, her guardian, who was, I believe, also her great-uncle, came down to see her. Perceiving, from the influences around the girl, that if some wholesome change were not made in her way of life, that she would, of her own accord, as soon as she should become of age, go into a convent; and that such a change must be made while he yet had power over her person; he took her back with him on a visit to her relatives in St. Mary's City. There her condition was so completely changed that from being one of the most secluded of recluses, she became the most brilliant belle at the gay court of the Lord Proprietary.

And yet she retained all her truth and goodness. The death of her grandmother, at an advanced age, and who, by the way, died in an odor of sanctity, brought her back to Henniker House for a season; but she was never brought to the gloomy asceticism that had darkened her youth. After the year of mourning expired she went again to St. Mary's City, accompanied by her mother. On the elder lady, also, the change of scene produced a wholesome effect. She went with her daughter much into society, and was much elated by the admiration everywhere bestowed upon the lovely Maidlen. Indeed, the change

that came over both mother and daughter was quite wonderful.

The removal of the guilty woman and gloomy fanatic who had darkened their lives, no doubt helped this very much.

Mrs. Calvert was even induced to tolerate a suitor to her daughter, when that suitor was also one of the most distinguished young men in the province. But she could not at once get over the terror of the curse. It will perhaps amaze you to hear that these two women, mother and daughter, being then of sound and well cultivated minds, before giving a final answer to this suitor, actually did make a secret pilgrimage to the Indian village of Pomocomo to inquire into the matter of the malediction and to consult an Indian medicine man magician on the subject.

The "Eagle Eye"—the old chief, was long since dead. The son, the "Dead Shot," was absent on a hunting expedition. But "Long Sight," an Indian seer of fabulous age and wonderful wisdom, was sunning himself in his wigwam door. Him the pilgrims consulted, and his answer was as obscure and impossible of fulfilment, as any oracle ever uttered of old!

A chain of impossible contingencies threw the mother and daughter into the deepest despair. They returned to St. Mary's City, and after some days of intense suffering, sent for the impatient suitor and confided to him the conditions and the curse. Being of a strong mind and joyous spirit, he laughed at both. So fine and wholesome was his influence over both women that he brought them over to his views, and he married Maidlen Calvert.

Eight months after the marriage, one night when she was sitting up late, waiting for his return, and wondering why he, who never staid out so late before, should be gone so long now, his dead body was suddenly brought home to her

by the constables. It had been found in the street. There was no visible cause for his death, no mark of violence upon his person. And a subsequent post-mortem examination showed no disorganization within. The cause of his sudden death remained an impenetrable mystery.

The shock of her husband's sudden death proved fatal to the lovely young widow. She was seized with the pangs of premature labor, and gave birth to twins—a boy and a girl. The boy lived only to be baptized, and then died. The young mother survived but a few hours and expired. She was buried with her baby on her bosom. All this happened within eight months after the fatal marriage. The surviving twin, the little delicate girl, was adopted by the broken hearted mother of Maiden, and most tenderly brought up. She taught the babe to call *her*, mother, and the little Dorothy never knew her otherwise. Mrs. Calvert died when Dorothy was about eighteen years of age. On her death-bed she confided the family secret to the keeping of her daughter, as she always called the girl, and she enjoined her, with her last dying breath, never to continue the curse by marrying.

And the fair Dorothy obeyed the solemn injunction for a time, indeed. She had many suitors but rejected them all, until the frank and gallant sailor Captain Jernyngham, met her in society and fell in love with her. A very handsome and attractive man he was. Dorothy could not withstand him. She loved him to distraction. She told him her story and left the issue with him. He, like his predecessor, laughed the curse to scorn! He said that the deaths of the two former men were mere coincidences; that in wild and unsettled times and places men were liable to sudden and violent death; that he himself was a sailor and might at any time find a watery grave without anybody taking the trouble to curse him into it.

So they were married.

Father Ignatius, who performed the ceremony, and who was the spiritual guide of both, enjoined them never more to mention the malediction, but to let the very memory of it die out. And from that moment the matter was hushed up.

But that silence did not save the gallant young sailor from the doom that he had dared in marrying a daughter of the accursed House of Henniker. Within a year of his wedding day, he fell in a sea-fight.

He left a daughter to carry on the family fate.

But from the day the Indian Princess invoked the curse upon the race, no male heir has been born to the line, and no heiress has been married without being widowed within the year.

WAS IT A GHOST?

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

It was my last week at school—I had been an inmate of the celebrated Seminary of ———, in Wilmington, for three years past. I had graduated the last term, but induced my father to allow me to remain a few months longer, to perfect myself in music and German, and return to him a *finished* young lady. Ah! how much more is expressed in that one word, than is really intended. *Finished!* Yes, too often in all the arts of coquetry and deception, and not unfrequently, a *finish* is put to all hopes of the young lady proving either a source of happiness or comfort to her parents. My chief regret in bidding adieu to school-days was the parting from my dearest friend and room-mate. I had tried to induce her to return home with me for the Christmas festivities; but she would not think of it; she must return to her home, her father needed her, but she had never invited me to visit her. Often she had said:

“Oh! if you could only go with me.”

I was sitting wondering about this, when I was clasped in her arms, and she exclaimed:

“At last, dear Pearl, I have father’s permission to bring you home with me,—you know I have told you he was afflicted with a dreadful melancholy—and he will never see any strangers; therefore we have little or no company,—but now brother has to leave on business for a month, and

he has written for me to return immediately, and bring you with me; oh! I am so happy."

I was glad too; and anticipating this, had obtained father's consent, if invited, to return with Eva Garnett to her home in Virginia. I had met Frank, her brother, several times when he came to visit his sister, and was not very unwilling to meet him again; but of this, or of there being a brother in the question, father had never heard.

We arrived at the depot only a few miles from Oak Grove, and were met by the old driver Uncle Lew. with the carriage, who said:

"Massa Frank sends his 'grets, and say ole marse too sick for him to be leff alone."

A few minutes' drive, and we reached Eva's home. I gazed with amazement at the massive stone wall, high ceilings, and deep-set windows—so different from the pretty white cottages of our village in New Hampshire. Indeed, it was a grand old place; but I could not throw off the feeling of awe which seemed to have taken possession of me.

Frank met us in the hall, saying:

"Do not be uneasy; father is not ill, more than usual, but he seemed more depressed, and I thought you would excuse me."

I thought he held my hand a little longer than necessary, and looked in my eyes in a way that satisfied me—I knew I had been remembered. Eva spent most of the evening with her father, and Frank, with me, in the grand old drawing-room. I could not, to save me, help looking over my shoulder occasionally. At last Frank said:

"What is the matter, what are you looking for?"

"Oh! nothing! Please excuse me. But I have never been in such a large, stately room. It reminds me of the 'Haunted Hall' of olden times," I lightly said.

He gave me a strange and inquiring look, which I did not understand then, but soon afterwards did.

"I will try to dispel such gloomy thoughts," said Frank. Rising and opening the piano, he began playing a brilliant inspiring air; at its conclusion he pulled the bell-cord, which was answered by a bright-looking negro boy of about twelve years.

Frank gave him a nod. The boy made a profound bow, and as the keys of the instrument sent forth the strains of a merry jig tune, he began to dance. I had heard much of the negro dancing, but never before had seen any. Surely this was the perfection of a "Virginia break down." Eyes, nose, mouth, every feature and limb participating in the dance. I laughed immoderately at his various antics, which were kept up for fifteen or twenty minutes; then Frank said:

"That will do, Sinbad, you can go." With another deep bow and a continuation of summersets he took his departure. Frank had to leave next morning early, on a three-weeks' trip, and I saw scarcely anything of Eva, as she had to be in her father's room all the time.

I went to my room quite early; and, in about an hour, Mammy Cassie, Eva's old nurse, came, saying:

"I thought you might be kind of lonesome, so I came up to stay wid you, if you please, Missey."

"I am very glad to have you, for I do feel a little timid. I never like to be alone much; and indeed, mammy, this place makes me think of all the ghost-stories I have ever heard of."

She gave me the same queer look that Frank had, and said: /

"Missey, some of dese niggers been telling you some of dem foolishness about dis place, I know."

"No indeed, mammy! I've not heard anything of the kind," I answered.

"Well den honey, in case dey mout, and not tell de truff, I 'spect I better do it myself."

"Thank you, mammy," I answered; "I love Eva dearly, and of course feel deeply interested in all concerning her friends. Go on, please."

"Well you see, Missey, I'se been in dis family all my life. I was Miss Evaline's (dat's Miss Eva's mar) maid. I was wid her all de time till her death, which happened when Miss Eva was only two years ole. Poor Miss Evaline, she died of a broken heart. She cotched de melancholy from Miss Eva's pa, and it killed her, honey; no kind of disease but dat. But I must tell you how Miss Evaline came to marry de Doctor. You see, honey, ole miss, dat's Miss Eva's grandmar, she died and leff Miss Evaline when she was only a little baby. My mammy riz her and me togedder. Ole Marse Captain Garnet he was so wrapped up in his little darter he nebber married agin, and nebber would hab her out of his sight; nebber sent her away to school, but had teachers to her. Well, after she learn all de gobness could teach her, ole marse he would hab her go to town Richmond, to 'joy society and fashable life. Ole marse nebber was berry healthy arter his wife's death, and offin use to hab bad spells come ober him; so one night while he was in town he was taken awful bad. Everybody says he mus die; dey send me for de doctor. In course I goed for de one closest by, and fetch Doctor Powers.

"Miss Evaline she ketches hole on him, and look at him so moanful and 'seeching like, telling of him to save her dear pa, and she'd gib him ebery ting in de worle she had. She nebber 'spected den what a big price he was goin' to ask.

"Well, honey, 'ginst ebery body tinkin, old marse

proove under de doctor's care, and got rite smart. An' oh! my hebenly marster! how he did take to de doctor! Lub no body so much but Miss Evaline. Would hab him go home wid him, tellin' of him he shouldn't lose nothin' by it. Deed honey, dat ole man set himself about to make dat match 'tween dem two young people. Miss Evaline she feel'd grateful to de doctor, and in course liked him some, and he growed monsus fond of her. Well, de whole of it was, dat dey was married side de marser's death bed. He made de doctor promise to take de name of Garnet, 'cause how, he did not want de name to die out; and Miss Evaline was de only one left.

"Marse Doctor always was mity solemn, and all de darkeys say he was 'penting of sum sin. Howsumebber, arter Marse Frank's birth he seem a little bit cheerful like, but it didn't lass long, he growed bad agin and wus. Miss Evaline she got so too, and was all de time pining like; and after little Miss Eva was born she nebber got strong agin and stop smilin, den went to sighing till she just pined away. Marse Doctor been awful bad ebber since, and 'deed, honey, he habn't been out of his room, dat I knows of, for sixteen years. He hab dredful times, groaning and sayin' dat life is a burdin. And now honey, de niggers say how somebody walks on de long piazze and groans. I'de hearn de groans but I nebber dared to look out. Miss Eva or Marse Frank always sleeps in de room wid him, to try and quiet him when he is so bad. Now honey don't you nebber let on I'se told you dis. I'se dun now."

"Thank you, Mammy, you may depend on my silence. I am very tired and think I will go to bed," I replied. The travel and long ride had exhausted me considerably, and before I had thought much on the story of the Garnet family, I was wrapped in sleep, and did not awake until next morning, and beheld Mammy standing by my bedside with a cup of delicious coffee, and saying:

“Gracious Massey! How sound you does sleep. A body mout run off wid you and not wake you up. Miss Eva’s bin up four hours. Marse Frank’s gone long ago, and breffast bin ready ebber so long.”

I hastened to dress, and soon joined Eva in the breakfast-room. She said her father had passed a pretty quiet night.

I saw little of her during the days except at meal times. I was not at all lonesome, however. I amused myself getting an insight into plantation life.

At tea Eva said:

“Pearl darling, I can be with you so little, I am fearful you will regret your visit. But when Frank returns I shall be with you more; we will take turns, attending to father. You will not think hard of it, dear?”

I satisfied the dear girl, and returned to my room quite early.

Mammy made her appearance very soon after, and insisted on making up a log fire, saying:

“Mus do it, missey, keep off de ague. Tis helfy; we alays dus it. Den agin it looks cheerful.”

I had to agree. After being amused some hour or so by her humorous and wonderful stories, I began my preparations for retiring. I had determined to be on the watch that night for the ghost. But how should I hear it; an idea struck me:

“Mammy,” I said, “you can keep your fire going if you choose, but I must have the fresh air. So I shall let the window be open a little way.” And so it was arranged.

I watched and listened, but no sounds came to indicate the ghost as being near. At length I fell asleep. How long I remained so I cannot tell, when I was awakened by deep, heart-rending groans! Yes, and slow, measured steps under my window. I looked around; mammy was sleeping soundly. After a few moments I became

quite calm, and stepping lightly out of the bed, approached the window and looked out!

Oh horror! horror! There truly, as mammy had said, walked the ghost!

A tall, dark figure, nothing distinctly discernible but the long, white hair, flowing from the bowed head, and the skeleton hands which were crossed on the breast. I could not move or scream; I was stiff and speechless with terror. No mistaking it—a real, true ghost! I continued to gaze until at last it disappeared at the end of the piazza.

At length I managed to get back to bed, but there was no more sleep for me that night. In the morning I was fearful Eva would wonder at my haggard looks, so I feigned headache, attributing it to mammy's hot fire.

The next night I enquired of mammy where the doctor's room was.

"In de room undernefe dis, at de end of de piazza," she answered.

"Mammy, I would give any thing to get a look at Eva's father! Please let me go peep in the window? There can be no harm in it, and no one will know it!" I said.

"Well, honey, deed I dun no *what* to say. I cant see no harm, cept it's bery cold and you sure to ketch cold. Better wait till a warmer night," she said.

I succeeded however in persuading her to let me out and show me down.

"Well dear, wrap your self up; here's a heavy cloak of Massa Frank's, put dis' round you," and she wrapped me up warmly.

As I went through the hall I spied a riding cap of Eva's hanging on the rack, and I placed it on my head.

Mammy directed me to the window, saying she would wait in the passage for me. I reached the window, and listened for a moment before I dared to look in. All was

quiet. I ventured to look. I first saw only Eva—who was reading, with her back towards me. Then I gazed around the room. My eyes fell on the side-face of a man seemingly at least eighty years of age—his hair hanging in long silvery locks down a pale, thin face so familiar to me. I could hardly help exclaiming, “Oh, I must know him!” But where had I seen it before? I was fascinated, spell-bound; how long I stood, I knew not,—when I was recalled to my senses by an almost unearthly scream of terror!—and the old man stood up, pointing to the window! I darted back; but not before I heard him exclaim:

“My God! look Eva. See, I murdered that man twenty-five years ago!”

I could not move from my position behind the shutters. I was paralyzed with terror. I felt sure the ghost was near and had been looking over my shoulder in the window; and this idea brought action. I flew with more than lightning speed up to my room; and sinking, exhausted, on the floor, exclaimed:

“Mammy! the ghost!”

“Jist as I mite hab knowed. Did yer seed it?”

I explained to her what had happened. She looked very uneasy, and said:

“Honey, not for yer life let Miss Eva find out yer ben down dar and heerd de doctor say dat, case how it would make her feel monsus bad. Yer keep ebery bit to yer self. Ise spect de ghost was lookin’ ober yer shoulder when he sed it. Ise glad it warnt dis chile, case I bin in t’other world now, honey.”

There was but little chance of sleep now. I tossed about all night, trying to bring to mind where I had seen that face, but all in vain. Near morning, I fell into uneasy sleep, from which I was aroused by Mammy calling to me:

“Miss Pearl, honey, Miss Eva’s bin up all de night wid

de doctor, and she now send for yer to come. 'Spect he dy-ing fast, case how he don't know nobody; he bin ravin' all night about de face at de winder. De lors, honey, just to think ob yer havin' a dead one lookin' ober yer shoulder and not feel it."

I hurried on my wrapper and followed her down to the master's room. She opened the door, and Eva came forward, took my hand and led me to the bed, saying:

"My poor father has suffered terribly all night, and now he seems perfectly unconscious to all things around; and I have grown very weak and nervous, and cannot bear to be alone; so I have sent for you."

And here she threw her arms around my neck and gave vent to her grief. I did not try to stop her. I thought better let her weep; it would relieve her. At last she became calm, and with my arm supporting her, we sat down beside the couch to watch the sufferer.

I was bending close and trying to catch the incoherent words, hoping to gain some clue to his trouble. That face—oh! where had I seen it?—Hush! What is he saying?

"Everton, as God hears me, I did not mean to kill you! Why will you come to me?—why do you look at me so pitying?—Take away your eyes!—Eva, come stand between me and Everton Leston's eyes!—Will they never cease to haunt me?"

What terrible mystery was this? My father's name—and his eyes haunting the sick man,—what could it mean? I looked at Eva; her face was convulsed with terror. She signed me to leave the room. I went out, and in a few moments *memory* came to my assistance. I sent Mammy to stay with the doctor, and say to Miss Eva I must see her in my room immediately.

She was soon with me. Poor child! these few days of watching and suffering had made its impress on her fair face.

She hardly looked like the same girl that had returned home a week before. I drew her down beside me and said :

“My darling Eva, I had an irresistible desire to see your father, and so I coaxed Mammy to let me go down and peep at him last night. I was at the window, and heard him when he screamed out to you ; and, listen, my darling, in your father’s face I beheld a most familiar one—the original of a little oil picture that is in my father’s library, and I distinctly remember the name written on the back of it, Wm. Powers Manning. I clearly remember, on one occasion, I asked father who it was. And now hear the strangest thing about it : he said that it was the likeness of a very dear friend that was drowned years before. Now, Eva, what is the mystery that both think the other dead ?”

Her face wore an expression of mingled doubt and hope while I was telling her. At the conclusion she exclaimed :

“Oh, Pearl, can this be true ? Is there hope ? Is my father free from this terrible crime ? No, no, it cannot be ! Ever since I remember, he has been trying to hide from some vision of terror ! The servants say that a figure has often been seen on the long piazza, and looking in father’s window ; he has often called me to see.”

“Eva,” I said, rather sternly, “you must now tell me all you know of your father’s story. His life may depend on it.”

“Yes, yes, I will tell you all. Last night after seeing the face at the window, he was fearfully agitated. I tried to soothe him. After a while he became a little calm, and said, ‘My daughter, I would not appear to you more guilty than I really am ; therefore, before I die, I must confide to you the sorrow that is wearing, yes, torturing my life away. To no human have I ever breathed it, not even to your mother. My child, that face that I saw at the window was a cousin

of mine that I murdered and then sunk his body in the river, twenty-five years ago. I was an orphan, and was adopted and educated, by uncle. He had only one child. This boy and I grew up together and graduated at the same time—he as a lawyer, I a physician. We were very much attached to each other. At last a trouble came between us. We both loved the same girl. It was not long before I found out who was the favored one. So, after a severe struggle, I made up my mind to leave my home and that part of the country, where I should not see her or hear of my cousin's happiness. So I made all my arrangements. I told my uncle I wanted to travel a little, and drawing from him my ten years' savings, amounting to about a thousand dollars, I was about bidding adieu to my friends, when Everton came and insisted on carrying me down to the cars in his boat on the river, instead of in the carriage. It was a lovely moonlight evening, and I was very glad for a ride on the water. After being out a few moments, he commenced to run me a little on my having loved in vain. He was a wild fellow, and seemed never to have a serious thought. I hardly know what was said, but I became enraged, crazed, and catching up a piece of iron lying in the boat, I dealt him a murderous blow. I was brought to my senses by seeing him lying dead before me. The next thought was of self-preservation—escape from, not the punishment, but the disgrace. In a few moments I had decided what to do; for thoughts are very bright when we are in peril. I rowed near the shore, and lifting the body from the boat, I laid it on the sandy shore in shallow water, as if washed up. Then I threw off my hat into the boat, taking from my carpet-bag a sleeping cap to put on. I knew that the cars would pass below in about half an hour, and stop at the tank to water. I would have time to take them. So leaving my bag, overcoat, and everything belong-

ing to me, I gained the cars in time. It was quite dark; no one recognized me. I did not take my trunk—that was waiting at the station. I then left my home in New Hampshire for ever. I felt sure that when they found my cousin's body the impression would be that mine had sunk from the weight that was round my waist—my money was in a belt, and all in coin. The leaving of all baggage would strengthen this belief. I travelled South and settled at Richmond, rented an office and put out my sign, Wm. Powers—my middle name. Here I met your mother, and you know the rest—how I changed *my* name to *hers*, at her father's request, instead of her changing hers to mine. What a continued life of remorse and torture I have suffered! Were it not for you and your brother I would go at this late day and proclaim myself a murderer.'

"This is all he told me. Afterward he became feverish and wandering all night, like you found him. Oh, Pearl, tell me what it is? what I can do to relieve him?"

"My dear Eva, cheer up, you shall have a happier Christmas than ever before. I shall write to my dear father, urging him to come here immediately. You, Eva, you go to your father, give him his soothing powder, and after he has slept, break the 'glad tidings' to him. Every moment will be an age to us now, until his poor, wearied, suffering heart shall find rest. Go to him and I will write my letter."

I hastily wrote :

"Come to me, my dear father. Here in the house with me is one you have long supposed in the Spirit World. Wm. Powers Manning is dragging out a miserable existence, for twenty-five years suffering terribly with the pangs of remorse; for thirteen years he has not been among his fellow men. Come, my father, and explain the mystery that is torturing his mind and wringing his poor heart, so that life is a miserable burden. Be with me on Christmas day."

I finished, and old Uncle Lew. was soon on his way to the office. At breakfast Eva told me her father was sleeping gently; so he continued until the afternoon; he awoke much calmer, and Mammy had a nice cup of coffee, muffins and broiled chicken waiting for him. She told me he seemed to relish it more than he had for a long time. I waited in the greatest anxiety to hear from Eva if she had told him, and how. It was near night when she came.

"How is he, does he know?" I cried out; but I saw by her happy face that "All was well."

"He is asleep again. After he awakes you will go in to him. When I succeeded in making it quite plain to him, and concluded by telling you had written for your father to come to him, he exclaimed:

" 'Eva, you can pray; thank God, my daughter, for his mercy! I have never prayed since that fearful night. I have felt so unworthy, so far from God. When your sainted mother would try to comfort me, and say, 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' I could not even say, 'God help me.' I felt that until I could confess to the world my crime, I could not, I dare not, ask help or comfort of him. But now, oh! my child, he has sent this comfort, this peace, in answer to the united prayers of you on earth, and your mother in heaven.'

"I dropped on my knees and thanked Him; and after my prayer was ended, he said, 'Amen.' He had been praying too; he had approached God, and had not been repulsed.

"His face was almost radiant. He said:

" 'I feel that God has forgiven me, not for that crime, but for want of faith in him—

Here we were interrupted by the entrance of Mammy, who said.

"Miss Eva, your par dun waked up, and want you to cum to him!"

"I will go to him, Pearl dear, and when he is ready to see you, I will come, or send for you," said Eva, as she went out. Mammy remained. I could see she had something she was very anxious to tell. As soon as Eva was out of hearing, she exclaimed:

"Oh, my bressed father! Miss Pearl, honey, sumthin dun cum ober de Doctor, 'deed tis so! His face, what was all de time so dark and ful o' trubble, looks jest like a shining light now for all de world, like he dun been to Hebben.—Dare! dat his bell ringin now," and Mammy hurried off. Very soon she was back again to say, Eva wanted me to come see her father.

In a few moments more I was standing beside the Doctor, my hand clasped in his.

What a wonderful change had those few hours, (since I last saw him), made. He looked full twenty years younger, and the radiant expression on his features, very well might suggest the idea to Mammy—"That he looked as if he had been to Heaven."

"Oh! my child," he said, "you are so very much *like* your father was when I saw him last. Sit down beside me, my dear. 'Oh! how wonderful and mysterious are the ways of Providence.' You, dear child, have been the instrument of working out His divine will—His great mercy towards such a poor unworthy object as I am. Oh! Pearl, you have been a jewel of inestimable value to me. When shall I see your father, my dear?"

I told him when, with God's blessing, father would be with us. He was very cheerful, and talked much of his youthful days with my father. I remained until quite late, in his room, and when I returned to my own, I found Mammy almost dying with curiosity and amazement.

"Miss Pearl, honey, do please tell me what has cum ober dis house, an all de people in it. Eberybody smilin, and I clare to de Lord, ef Miss Eva didn't cum down stairs dis tea time singin. Fus time Ise hearn her, since she were a little gal. Ise begin to blieve dat de debbil's chained at last," she exclaimed, as soon as I was seated.

I knew how good and worthy she was, and really how deeply interested in the happiness of the family. So I gave her a brief explanation of the facts; at the conclusion of which I witnessed for the first time, Mammy's, and indeed, most of her race's manner of expressing their joy, &c.

"'Scuse me, Miss Pearl, but deed I hab to shout a little. I hab to tank my bressed Massa for liftin de dark spell what's bin ober dis house so long," she said. And she began singing, jumping, and clapping her hands, and continued until she sank, quite exhausted, to the floor.

The next day, and the intervening ones until Christmas, were spent in preparing for a joyous time. The Doctor rapidly improved, and we had every hope of his eating his Christmas dinner with his family.

With Cloe's, the housemaid, and Sinbad's assistance I decked the drawing-room with holly and evergreens, and succeeded in divesting it of its usually gloomy appearance, and when the blessed day came at last, and we had a large hickory fire blazing brightly, and the Doctor seated in his crimson armchair beside it, everything looked very cheerful. Eva and I were close up to the windows listening for the first sound of the carriage, at last.

"I hear the wheels, they are coming!" exclaimed Eva, and in a few minutes more we were out on the porch to welcome those so dear to both. After being released from my father's arms, I began a general introduction, when father said:

"Never mind that, daughter. I made my young

cousin's acquaintance at the station, when we were both waiting for the carriage, and if I mistake not, this is another cousin," turning and warmly greeting Eva.

We carried him in to the doctor. They were soon clasped in each other's arms, and "Thank God you are living!" burst simultaneously from each.

All eyes were dimmed with tears of joy—all hearts sending up thanksgiving to the Throne of Mercy. I doubt if ever, since the olden time when the Wise Men of the East came and found a Saviour was born to the world, there has been such a day of deep joy and thankfulness.

Eva and I stepped out into the dining-room. We felt that there must be none to witness or hear their mutual explanation. Frank, who had returned, soon followed, and I put out my hand and said:

"Where is my Christmas present, Cousin Frank?"

Before he could answer, Eva exclaimed:

"Why Frankie! What is the matter? You look as gloomy as if you had lost every friend in the world!"

"Not so, my little sister; but I do not quite fancy the title of cousin from Pearl."

"Oh, now I comprehend," laughingly exclaimed Eva. "Just now I am 'de trop.'"

"Not until I have made my peace by a Christmas offering." And he drew from his pocket a little box, which he opened, and placed upon her finger a magnificent solitaire diamond, saying: "I heard you admiring one your friend had, so I brought you this."

"Oh! thank you, darling! But where is Pearl's present?"

"Here it is. But you must not open it until I give you leave."

And he handed me a much larger box.

Eva left us; and, taking my hand, Frank led me to the sofa, saying:

"The occurrences of to-day have forced from me what you may, perhaps, think too hasty, and, possibly, presumptuous. But I don't wish to be your cousin; I have hoped for something nearer, dearer. I have loved you since I first saw you, and have fancied that you were not indifferent to me; but I should not have spoken to you until I had been assured of this, had not this newly-discovered relationship forced it from me. Tell me, darling, can you love me?"

"I don't choose, my dear readers, to tell you just what I answered; but I think Frank was satisfied, for in a little while we were kneeling before my father's feet.

"What is this! going to ask me to give up my Pearl so soon! How can I do this?"

"Bless them, Everton; let our children bind us closer to each other. Your blessing on them will prove your true reconciliation with me."

"God bless you, my children! But you cannot have her just yet, my boy. We will all travel a little; it will restore your father's health, and in one year, if you are of the same mind, then I will give you my Pearl."

"Garnets and Pearls should always be set together, I think," exclaimed Eva, coming up to us, catching the box from my hand, and opening it, displayed an elegant set of garnets and pearls, saying:

"Just think of his presumptuousness! See here,—father, cousin,—look!"

When alone with my father, he told me that he had only been stunned by the blow his cousin had dealt him, and that the cool water dashing against his head soon restored him, and he was able to get home—never mentioning to his father and friends the quarrel between them, simply stating that the boat had upset, and he feared William was lost, as he could not swim with the weight around

him. Continued search was made for him—at last all hope was given up; and they all mourned for him as dead. My father married, in a few months, my mother—who died at my birth.

We all went and travelled for a year—the trip across the ocean greatly benefiting the doctor's health. We returned to my own home, where my father gave me to Frank.

There is no more talk of ghosts at Oak Grove. After the doctor's restoration to health and happiness, he gave up the midnight walks on the piazza which had given rise to the report amongst the negroes that the place was haunted. Mammy said:

"She had often heard of people gibbing up de ghost, but 'deed, dis time, de ghost gib up de doctor."

Eva married, two years after her return from Europe, a young gentleman of our village; and she does much to comfort my father for my absence, which is only during the winter. We spend the summer with him. Frank said, a few days ago, "that the little jewels that are surrounding me now will put a stop to these frequent northern trips; that he intends to write and say to father he must come himself this Christmas and see how well the Pearl looks now surrounded by little Garnets!"

“MERCY.”

A NEW YEAR'S STORY.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

“And judge none lost; but wait and see,
With hopeful pity, not disdain;
The depth of the abyss may be
The measure of the height of pain,
And love and glory that may raise
This soul to God in after days.”

As the hall door of an elegant mansion on —— Square, the house of Louise Maynard, opened for the departure of the exquisite, Clarence Caldwell, it at the same time admitted the humble seamstress, little Ruth Love.

A shudder passed through the girl, whose face bore a look of unmistakable repugnance as the man brushed past her. Hurrying on, she ascended the stairs, entered the sewing-room, and began her daily work.

Louise Maynard came in, looking proud and happy, and Ruth's little fingers were soon busy fitting a dress on the fine figure waiting to receive it.

Frequently a look of impatience flitted over Miss Maynard's face, and at length she said, sharply :

“You are very slow and dull this morning, Ruth. I am completely tired out standing here. You do not seem to know what you are about.”

“You are right, Miss Louise; I am scarcely conscious of what I am doing. My heart is not in my work. It is almost bursting with anxiety; longing, yet scarce daring to speak to you.”

“To me! What can you have to say of such importance as to agitate you thus? But say on, Ruth, and relieve your heart, if possible.”

“Oh, Miss Louise, I want to warn you against Clarence Caldwell. He is not a good man. Do not trust him!”

“Girl, you surely forget who you are, and to whom speaking! This, if not very impertinent, would be truly amusing! In your position, you have scarce the opportunity to judge of Mr. Caldwell’s worth,” said the haughty and angry girl.

“I can. I have. It is from his own language to me that I judge him. He is a bad man, Miss Louise. Oh, trust him not!”

“Mr. Caldwell’s language to the seamstress, quite likely, is somewhat different than he addresses to *me*. You have quite forgotten, girl, our different stations in society.”

“I’ve forgotten nothing, Miss Louise; I remember your mother’s continual kindness to the orphan seamstress, and for her sake I would warn her child. Believe me, the person disgracing the name of man, who will try to trifle with the heart—worse still, the fair fame, the *all*, of even an humble sewing-girl, is not to be trusted by any pure woman; and well may parents regard him with an anxious, watchful eye,” said Ruth, in a voice quivering with agitation.

“Go, girl; I have no further need of you. I will endeavor to supply your place by one who will know and keep her position better. My mother’s kind indulgence has turned your brain,” and Louise Maynard swept haughtily from the room.

Many were the speculations relative to the reason of Clarence Caldwell’s selecting Louise Maynard to bestow his heart and hand upon, when there were other girls within his reach of far more beauty and personal attraction

Louise was not a favorite among her own sex ; she was too haughty and cold to be popular. Some said it was not for love of Louise that made Clarence so devoted ; but love of her father's gold. Be this as it might, time would soon prove. Preparations were going on for a fast-approaching wedding-day, 'twas said ; and if this was true, they were soon cut short by a dire calamity. The last offices for the dead were going on in the home of Louise. Her father's lifeless form was all that remained of him who only a few hours before was in apparent health and strength, blessed and blessing others with his cheerful, happy spirits.

Mr. Maynard's supposed countless wealth proved (as is often the case) very much exaggerated. Large liabilities were to be met ; and when all the business of settling up was concluded, little or nothing remained—barely a meagre support for his widow and child.

Then came reports of neglect and desertion on the part of her hitherto devoted lover. A little while longer, and busy tongues whispered hints of imprudence, temptation, betrayal, trust, and final flight to conceal her misery. Louise Maynard had certainly disappeared, none knowing her destination.

Ruth Love's quiet beauty met the eye of the young minister officiating as assistant in the parish where Ruth attended divine worship. He sought her society, and knew her worth. He felt sure hers was the heart to enter with his into the service of God, and not only be a loving wife, but a true helpmate. He wooed and won the gentle girl.

In comfortless apartments, in a very obscure street sat a young woman, busily plying her needle, every feature of the pallid, wan face telling plainly that in her sad heart dwelt misery and despair.

Every now and then her eye wandered from the coarse fabric on which she was working, to the bed close by, on

which seemed to be some object of particular interest. Suddenly she stopped and listened, as a clear, distinct knock sounded on the outer door. Starting up, she approached, and was about opening it, when quickly retracing her steps, she went to the bed, and taking carefully up a bundle, disappeared into an adjoining room. Soon returning, and closing the door after her, she hastily opened the one opposite, for the admittance of the visitor.

“You here!” she exclaimed in a voice of unmistakable annoyance, and surprise. And hastily turning around, she left the door, walked into the room, and stood with her back toward the unwelcome guest.

“Please let me come in, Miss Maynard. I want to see you so much. I have so many things to say to you, and it is very cold out here,” said a sweet, gentle voice.

“No, no. Go your own way, it is widely different from mine. And let me alone. You want to tell me of *your* happiness, and taunt me with my misery. Go, go,” was the answer in hard, bitter tones.

“I must come in, then, without a welcome,” and closing the door behind her, she approached her whose face was turned away; passed her arm around, and drew her form close to her own, saying:

“Dear Miss Maynard, look at me. Yes, my happiness is so great; I want you to share it with me. Hush! You must not say another word until you have heard me through. There, sit down, and let me! Louise, I am going away, very far from all kindred and friends. My husband has accepted a call in a distant State, and new settlements. He will be often away, I shall be very lonely among those strangers. I come here a suppliant. I want you to grant me a favor; one which will make me so thankful. It's this. Go with me! Be my sister, Louise!”

“An object of charity! The creature of bounty! Never.”

“No, no, my friend and sister, I shall need some one to sympathize and care for me, Louise! And here in your loneliness, you need the same. See, dear, we are in this equals. We will go into that new country as both equally meriting love and respect. All the past we will leave behind,” continued the pleading woman.

“We equals! You with a husband’s sympathy, love and respect! You talk wildly, girl. And what think you he would say to this pretty arrangement of yours. Even *now* if he knew where you were, he would censure you.”

“Oh! no, indeed! I am here with his sanction. It was through his means that I found you. He is not only willing, but anxious, to have you with us. And Louise, there is another, who, this very moment, is praying God’s blessing on my errand. Your mother dear. She knows of this visit, and unites her entreaties with mine. Oh! let me return to her, bearing to her poor wounded heart some comfort, some balm to soothe the ceaseless aching. Let me say you will come to her, gain her farewell blessing, and then go with me, into new scenes. And there she will come to see us. Oh! be sure, God will smile upon you, and all will be well again.”

The hardened heart was melting; the wounded spirit yielding, and at last, tears rolled from the hitherto dry, and burning eyes. She murmured:

“Give me time. I must think. This time to-morrow evening, come. God bless you, Ruth. Tell my mother she may see me to-morrow night, or never again in this world. Go, now, it is getting late, and this is a bad neighborhood for you to be alone.”

“My husband is somewhere near; do not worry. Promise me you will not go away; not try to elude us?”

“I promise I will meet you here, if I am living, and give you the answer; now, good bye.”

Four years have passed. In the western city of N——, now so rapidly increasing in wealth and importance, was the home of Rev. William Reese, in which, sharing equally with himself and wife the love and respect of the community, was Louise Maynard, far more attractive in appearance, more lovely in character, than ever before. Her pale face wore an expression so gentle, so sadly sweet, that we recognize it as the result only of a heart purified by sorrow.

She had never regretted her decision to seek peace and protection, in that home far away from the scene of her misery. And her loving-hearted friend, with her noble-minded husband, ever blessed the day which gave them such a source of comfort as Louise had proved. Deep, sincere gratitude filled her heart, and in every way she sought to prove it.

The impression had gotten abroad that Louise was a widow. What gave rise to this no one knew, save it might have been the deep sable robes she wore for her father's memory. This idea was finally dispelled by Ruth, who, on one occasion, when an acquaintance expressed the surprise "that her lovely friend should remain so long a widow," answered: "Louise is not a widow—far worse. She had been deserted by him who should have loved, honored and protected her."

Ruth felt that she had spoken the truth, and her visitor went off and confidently asserted that Miss Maynard was a deserted wife; and as such she received an increased show of kindness and sympathy from all who knew her.

New Year's morn dawned, smiling on the world. The minister's little home was filled with joy and gratitude. That bright day all was health and happiness. It had not been so lately. For long days and weary nights they had watched over beds on which lay little suffering forms so

dear to all. Now that was past, and the household darlings were making the house merry again with their sweet lisping voices.

Ruth sat holding in her arms, and pressing to her heart, her younger child, while playing around her feet was another little one. Frequently she raised her eyes to the clock on the mantel, and then they wandered towards Louise, who stood gazing on the frolics of a little child. Ruth had something evidently on her mind, trembling on her lips for utterance. Again she looked at Louise: this time she saw, standing in the sad eye, one large pearly drop; the quivering lids drooped, and the tear rolled slowly down the pale cheek and rested on the trembling bosom. Ruth felt this was an opportunity she must not lose. Rising from her chair, still clasping the infant boy in her arms, she approached her companion. Placing her hand quietly on her shoulder, she said:

“Louise, dear friend and sister, was there not once a little one who had the same claim on your love as this darling? Is not your heart this moment yearning, aching for that little form that a mother’s arm may clasp once more? Speak, Louise, relieve your poor heart. Tell your friend?”

“Oh! do you want to drive me mad? You know not what terribly cruel blows you are dealing my breaking heart. For mercy’s sake cease!” sobbed forth the miserable woman.

“Nay, nay, Louise, ’tis to comfort you, to prepare you for a great joy I speak—*Mercy* is coming to you. Listen, dear:—That day so long ago, when I came and found you in such deep grief, while I was waiting for you to open the door I glanced through the window and saw your hurried action—I saw you go into the adjoining room, bearing so carefully a little roll of flannel—I surmised the truth; and afterwards I thought the reason for your delay in giving me

an answer was most probably to make some arrangement for that little child. I told this idea to my husband. He directly formed a plan for getting the care of your child. It was through his means that the kind lady came to you next morning begging for the little one—promising to restore it to you whenever you should ask it. My husband placed the little one with those in whom he had perfect confidence, and regularly since has he heard from it. Before we left our old home he went and baptized your little child. He has often told me that the necessity of selecting a name never entered his mind until the very moment it was required, and then the thought came how much mercy would both that little child and the absent mother need, as well from earthly friends as Heavenly Father. So he called the little girl ‘Mercy.’

“Your loving care, your devotion to our little darling, has not gone unnoticed, Louise. We have seen it all, and appreciated it truly. More than this, our parent hearts have felt your sorrow. What should we do if deprived of our blessings? Louise, look up! you are about to have your reward. William has gone to the depot to return with your child. To bring your Mercy!”

Even while she was speaking a carriage rolled swiftly up to the door, and when she ceased her husband was before her bearing in his arms a bright-looking little girl, which, placing in the outstretched arms waiting to receive her, he said :

“Welcome your child, Louise! A New Year’s offering which I feel sure will fill the aching void so long existing in your heart. Take her, and be happy.”

Louise had not uttered one word from the time when Ruth’s words had conveyed to her mind the deep joy coming to her. And even when clasping her child to her breast, her heart almost bursting with gratitude, her lips

were powerless to speak. Her friends needed no words of thanks. They were content in the happiness they had bestowed. Late in the day, when the little ones were playing merrily in an adjoining room, Louise found words to relieve her overflowing heart, and tell of the deep gratitude she felt towards God and those dear friends whose efforts in her behalf He had so fully blessed.”

Before the rays of that New Year’s sun had faded into twilight, the minister’s home was again the scene of an occurrence of as deep interest and thrilling emotion to Louise Maynard as the one we have just witnessed. Most of the inhabitants of N—— will remember the dreadful scene of horror and suffering which occurred on that day, sending many souls so suddenly before their Maker, and leaving more to writhe in agony of bodily suffering.

It was a terrible railroad accident, occurring in the vicinity. Every house near by was filled with the sufferers. Those under the charge of William Reese were all cared for and made as comfortable as possible, and Ruth had just seated herself for a few moments’ rest, when Louise came forward; her usually pale face had grown paler; with compressed lips and wild eye she drew Ruth with her into the next room, and there noiselessly approaching an apparently lifeless form, she pointed.

Ruth gazed inquiringly a moment, then whispered: “Clarence Caldwell! Oh, God! how mysterious are thy ways!” and hurrying out she found and told to her husband the discovery they had made.

Frequently Louise flitted in and hovered near, watching the suffering man, until she noticed returning consciousness, then she withdrew to remain until summoned to the side of, as they all believed, a dying man.

“Come, Louise, he has recognized and is calling for you,” said Wm. Reese.

"No, no, I can not—I will not go," she said.

"Well, we are going to move his cot into this room; he will be more quiet, more private. You will see him here."

"No—I wish not to see him at all. While he lay senseless I wished to attend him; but not now—no, no."

"Louise, the physician says he *may* live, but most likely for a few hours only. He believes him bleeding internally, and if so, there is no hope. You will—you must see him," urged her friend.

They bore the crushed and bleeding form of Clarence Caldwell in.

Louise stood statue-like, cold, immovable, speechless. All withdrew save Ruth, who remained in a remote part of the room.

"Forgive, oh, forgive, Louise!" murmured the sufferer, in scarcely audible tones.

Still she moved not, breathed forth no word, even to tell she had heard his pleading voice.

"Louise, I am dying. Forgive! Speak one word only—one of forgiveness! God knows how truly I repent that dreadful wrong. Listen, Louise: I would repair the past. Say you forgive; give me the dying consolation of having done justice even at this late hour. Speak—speak!"

"Dying you repent; living you would regret that in the hour of weakness you yielded to the right. No, no! You deceived me in those days of love and trust; now I trust no more," said Louise, speaking then in hard, bitter tones.

A deep groan escaped from the miserable man. Ruth crept softly from the room. A bright, happy idea entered her mind. Soon returning, she bore in her arms the little child. Approaching, she held her before the mother's eye—hoping the influence of Mercy would soften the hardened heart.

The sinking man looked up eagerly, inquiringly into

Louise's eyes—then towards the gentle Ruth, who, understanding the anxious gaze, answered :

“Yes, your child it is.”

He made a feeble attempt to raise his arms, but they were powerless. Ruth knelt and placed the little one beside the father's bosom. The child was not frightened at the pallid, almost ghastly features. She was tired and sleepy, and passing her little arms around his neck, nestled her sweet head close up to his, closed her eyes, and seemed perfectly satisfied and happy. Was not that the most appealing and forcible argument that could have been used ?

Still unforgiving, unyielding Louise stood, and put forth her hands as if to remove the child, when the feeble voice whispered :

“Nay, let her be. She trusts me ; oh, why will not you ? Louise, for your child's sake, forgive. Let her bear her father's name. Do you not see I am dying ! Speak quick, quick, or *you* will be too late to do your child justice !”

“Oh ! yes for Mercy's sake,” pleaded Ruth.

“Then for Mercy's sake it is,” answered Louise, and she sank weeping beside the deeply penitent man.

In the solemn hour of that New Year's midnight, the deep earnest voice of William Reese pronounced them man and wife.

Contrary to all ideas Clarence Caldwell lived on, and during those long hours of suffering, he learned for the first time what love truly was—and fervently thanked God for the blessed boon of a patient, loving (as she gradually grew to be) wife. A few weeks more and when he grew able to be supported by Louise's tender arms out on the pleasant portico, they were all gladdened by the presence of Mrs. Maynard, William Reese's kind nature procuring this additional joy for the daughter's grateful heart. For some

years they all remained in that Western home, but now at this time they are back again, both families in their old home, the city of P——. No one enjoys more the love and respect of their neighbors than Clarence and Mrs. Caldwell. Occasionally an evil tongue finds courage to whisper forth a reproach of “by gone days,” but it is crushed back by the many and loud blessings coming from those they have comforted.

And now one word to those who have erred—step forth from the dark path—seek aid and forgiveness. Be sure that there is an ear ever ready to hear the first prayer for help. A heart into which you can pour your sorrow and find comfort. In Heaven your Father is waiting your return. Believe also that on earth there are those whose hearts have suffered with you, for you. They are ready with aid and sympathy to welcome you on to the path of virtue and peace. For the sake of the mother who bore you, the gray-headed father yearning to receive you, the sister who so fondly loved you, come on! Come back to love and God.

And you, my countywomen—look about you!

You, fond proud mother, who has reared to man and womanhood, honorable sons and virtuous daughters, cast your eye around! See if there is not within your reach a mother not so fortunate as you, perhaps you can help her in her sorrow, for those loved ones who have fallen!

The young wife blessed in her husband's love, sheltered by his strong, protecting arm, may find within her sphere of action one poor desolate heart who has trusted in finding all *you* have won, and been so cruelly deceived. Give her your sympathy at *least*.

Maidens, young and pure, ye who have bloomed and been fondly nurtured under the holy influence of pious, faithful mothers, see if you cannot find one who, having

been denied all that has blessed you, has been tempted and fallen! Help her to rise again. One gentle word—one kind action may save her. It will not dim your purity, but possibly brighten her dreariness.

And finally—to you, happy, hopeful young mothers, surrounded by your joyous innocent children, be not over confident in the blessing these little ones may prove. See the sorrow, the sad disappointment of your neighbor, once as hopeful and happy as you. Give her your assistance and comfort as you best can. Help her draw home again her erring ones. Remember your days of darkness may come. Merit God’s blessing on your little ones by your kind actions to the suffering. One and all—let not this coming New Year pass out without our having the blessed assurance in our bosom of having at least brought back one stray heart to its Creator—saved one soul from final destruction!

ESTELLE'S REVENGE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"The fairest action of our human life
Is scorning to revenge an injury;
For who forgives without a further strife,
His adversary's heart to him doth tie;
And 'tis a finer conquest, truly said,
To win the heart than overwhelm the head."

ESTELLE CAMPBELL was the belle of the factory girls. None disputed that position with her. Of the many employed in the establishment of Whitwell & Co., all agreed and yielded willingly the palm of beauty and grace to her.

She was respected by her employers, and loved by her companions, save one Mena Morris. This girl had no pretension to beauty. She did not care to rival Estelle in her acknowledged position; she was welcome to all and everything, except the love of young George Whitwell, the young lord as the girls called him. Mena loved him. Against all hope she saw his preference for Estelle, yet loved on with a determination to win him from her rival. She was very agreeable in manner—bright, cheerful, witty; it was impossible not to linger and listen to her sparkling fun and graphic descriptions.

George Whitwell had paid her considerable attention on her entry into the establishment. She was something different from the other girls, and then rumor said that she had an old miser uncle immensely wealthy, and she might be the heiress to vast possessions if the old man did not donate them to some one else.

For some time he wavered between these two, unwilling

to admit even to himself the growing interest he felt for Estelle — impossible for him to marry her. She was the sole support of her widowed mother, with no prospect ahead. In truth, he must admit that she was a fortune in herself to any man; but he was one of seven children, and could expect little or nothing from his father.

Prudence would suggest that if Mena should come in possession of the old miser's wealth, it would help him immensely; besides, Mena was very attractive and very fond of him, and no doubt he would be very comfortable, if not *supremely* happy. And so he determined to close his heart against this first pure affection, and blot out, if possible, the beautiful image from his mind.

A few days after this, his determination was put to a speedy flight, on overhearing a conversation between his parents to the effect that Mr. Mason, the moneyed man of the firm—the old bachelor who had boasted he had never loved any woman save his mother—had inquired of Mr. Whitwell if there was any serious intention on his son's part respecting Estelle? that he admired the young lady very much, and, in fact, had pretty much made up his mind to ask her to become Mrs. Mason.

In a moment he knew how much he loved. Estelle the wife of any one else? Never! He would go immediately and tell her what she was to him; and, if possible, win her consent to be his.

And so it was, Estelle engaged herself to him. He soon found out that beneath that dignified, reserved exterior, there breathed a heart glowing with the warmest, most devoted love, all centred in him. He had won her first pure maiden love.

George was very devoted to his lady-love, and urged a speedy union, saying,

“My darling Stella, I shall never feel sure of you until

you are truly my own," and added laughingly, "I shall be in constant dread of old Mason's gold dazzling my darling's eyes. Only think of what you are losing, by giving yourself to me. I have nothing but my true heart and strong arm to offer you."

"Oh George, do not talk so even in jest. You cannot doubt me. I might say the same to you in regard to Mena; it was very plain, she at one time seemed very fond of you: now even, you very often linger near her; yet I do not doubt you for a moment. I trust you even with *her*, and I well know all the time, how very fascinating she is. Indeed, at times, I really envy her in the possession of such a flow of good spirits. A day or so after our engagement became known, I thought she seemed a little depressed; but in a few days, she was again the same bright, laughing girl. With me, how very different. If I receive a wound, or sorrow, it seems to sink deeper and deeper into my heart.

"If it were possible for you to desert me," she one day said, "I should——"

"Die?" he asked, as she paused.

"No! Live for revenge!" she whispered, hoarsely.

A chill crept over him, he thought it rather uncomfortable to be loved thus.

In a moment more, she was the same gentle, loving girl again, and said:

"How foolish for us to talk thus. We have full confidence, judging each other by ourselves."

Mena never for a moment relaxed her arts to captivate this man, to whom she had given, unsought, her heart. She had a very strong, determined will.

The time appointed for the wedding was fast approaching. Yet she did not despair. She would continue to meet him every day, and hold him spell-bound for a time.

Fortune came to help her. The old miser was dead, died suddenly in the street; and Mena Morris became the sole inheritor of his immense riches.

'Twas the wedding morn. Happy, hopeful, in her blushing loveliness, waited Estelle.

A few of her companions were the only guests. It was to be a very quiet affair. She had neither means, nor the will to have it otherwise.

The hour has come, but what detains George?

A carriage drives rapidly up and stops.

"Oh! here he is, and his folks with him. I see his father," exclaimed her bridesmaid.

Old Mr. Whitwell entered alone. Approaching the blushing girl he exclaimed:

"My poor child! how can I tell you? How can you bear the dreadful news I bring you?"

"George—ill—dying—What is it? Tell me, quick, let me go to him," gasped forth the terror-stricken girl.

"Better so, dead to you—listen, child, call up your woman's pride! he is unworthy of you—he is now the husband of another. Married to Mena Morris, and gone to New York early this morning," said the father.

One heart-rending sob of agony burst from the white lips, and she sank like a broken lily.

Friends gathered round with hearts filled with sorrow and sympathy. Yet no words passed the lips of any, the eyes only expressing what they felt for her. They dare not speak—what could they say?

In an hour she arose from the couch, on which they had laid the loving girl, a cold, hard, stricken woman.

Thanking them for their kindness, she dismissed her friends—saying to old Mr. Whitwell:

"Do not look so sad—be sure, I shall not sink under this blow, I have something still to live for."

The old gentleman went home much relieved—thinking she alluded to her mother; and said to his wife:

“Oh, she is a good girl—none of your sentimental, die-away sort.”

Five years have passed away. Each year adding to the worldly good of George Whitwell—truly, time has dealt kindly with him. Is he happy? Yes—not troubled with a very sensitive or tender conscience, he goes on, rejoicing in his luxurious home.

Occasionally, a vision of the beautiful Estelle would come before him—a passing sigh of regret, perchance, would escape him—but it was soon lost in visions of gold and gain.

’Tis the fourth birthday of his only child—his boy, the idol of the household.

’Twas twilight, he sat in his library, listening to the peals of childish glee from the adjoining room. Little Harry is entertaining his friends.

Why is it, that now his mind goes back to the days of his love for Estelle? Visions of the cosy little sitting-room in the widow’s home, of his beautiful, gentle love, sitting with warm, soft hands clasped in his, of her beaming look of hope and joy, when he saw her the last time—the eve of his marriage—are before him.

The last ray of light has stolen out through the heavy curtains. The fire burns low in the grate, throwing flickering gleams of light through the room. Darker and darker it becomes, but there arose a still clearer vision. No longer the gentle girl stands before his “mind’s eye.” ’Tis the flashing eye, with intense gaze bent on him; compressed lips, which whispered in deep, bitter tones:

“I would live for *Revenge!*”

“A chill crept over him; he started from his arm-chair. How long he had sat thus he knew not. The sound of joy

had ceased in the next room. Lighting the gas and touching the silver bell, he sinks again into his chair.

A servant enters.

"Have the children all gone? Where is Harry?" he demanded.

"Yes, sir; and little Harry went with them to see the circus-car, with the band playing. I expect he will be in directly; his nurse is with him," answered the man.

An hour passed, and then came in the terrified nurse.

"Harry was gone—lost in the crowd; she had hunted everywhere, but could not find him."

I will pass over the terrible grief of the parents. The services of the police and most celebrated detectives were engaged; rewards offered; everything that love and wealth could do proved useless. He was gone.

Months passed on, and again came the birthday of their darling. All was gloom now. Misfortune had continued her attendance on the miserable man. Speculations had failed, and the riches for which he had bartered his happiness was dwindling fast away. But what cared he—only give him his boy back, and he would willingly—yes, gladly—toil, if necessary, for support.

A ring at the hall-door—a servant entered, and said:

"The post-man, sir."

And, handing a delicate little envelope, withdrew.

He gazed upon the writing.

"Surely it was very, very familiar; never but one wrote his name thus."

So, tearing it hastily open, he read simply these words:

"I would live for revenge."

But oh, how much more it said to him!

"Estelle, Estelle, you *have* been avenged," he cried.

Starting up, he was about to go and put this writing in Mena's hands. He hesitated. *She* had never been his comforter—never shared his sorrows.

Distrust dwelt within them. She never felt sure of the man who had trifled with the heart of a sister woman, even for her love. And he, at times, felt an almost shrinking from her who, with numberless acts and wiles, had induced him to flee from the path of honor. However, whilst their little darling was with them, they had something to unite their love, to warm their icy hearts. Little arms encircling each neck in one loving embrace, made them forget for the time, that they were not "all the world to each other."

Again he consulted and engaged the most celebrated detectives. Enquiries were made of Estelle in her native town, to the effect that after her mother's death she had gone to Philadelphia to live with a distant relative.

She was traced there, and found engaged in the fancy dress-making and costume establishment of her relative, and had not been absent from there for three years, and bore the highest character. So again all was dark. Nothing except the little note, to induce suspicion towards the injured woman.

Driven almost to desperation, he determined to find Estelle, accuse her, and entreat of her to give him his boy. "She must relent when she sees the miserable wreck I am. Her revenge will surely be complete," he said. He went, found her friends, and learned she had married some months before and gone to Europe.

His last hope was wrecked. He sought to drown his sorrow in the wine-cup—to retrieve his fallen fortunes by the "dice-box;" and in two years after the loss of his child, he was seldom freed from intoxication.

He subsisted entirely on the sums obtained by his wife, from the sale of one piece after another of the costly jewels and elegant apparel.

Again we see him sitting alone in the twilight. His eyes wandering over the almost comfortless room. His

brain is clearer than usual—a deep groan escapes from him, and he exclaims :

“Why should I not end, end this miserable existence? I am a curse to myself, a burden to the woman I have reduced to poverty—yes, yes, it will be a relief to Mena, and when Estelle hears of my lost life and miserable ‘winding up,’ will she not give one sigh of regret? Mena will not be back for a couple of hours, she said, and I can be at rest before she returns.”

He sank in his chair and taking from his vest a small phial, he gazed for a moment on it, whispered a few words—perhaps a prayer for mercy—and placed it to his lips. He hesitates—starts forward—“Ah! yes, she comes, a vision of Estelle.” Not the bitter, revengeful girl, but soft, gentle, smiling. With a look of deep sympathy, she puts forth her hand and draws away the fatal phial—no, ’tis *no* vision—’tis herself—living, breathing, speaking!”

“Let there be peace between us, George Whitwell,” she said, softly.

“You are satisfied, you relent; see what you have made me;” he bitterly said, “but give me back my boy and I will forgive you.”

“George Whitwell, as I hope for mercy and forgiveness from Heaven I did not steal your child, neither had I anything to do with it”—she said.

“The note! The note! you sent me on his birth day; you cannot deny that”—he groaned forth.

“No, of that I am guilty; a spirit of evil, induced me to do it. I knew of your loss, and had read an account of his being stolen on his birth-day—I was hard and wicked, and thought to give you an additional pang of agony, by inducing you to believe I was the cause of your sorrow,” she said.

"Why then have you come to me to-night? Why prolong my hours of misery?" he asked.

"Thank God for his mercy in sending me in time to save not only your life, but your soul. Did I not say I came to bring you peace? Listen—I have a story to tell you."

"You have heard, after my mother's death, I went to Philadelphia, and engaged in the Costume business with a distant relative.

"While thus engaged I was thrown in much with many persons belonging to the stage and circus companies. My poor pale face met with many admirers. I had love for none. My heart was, they said, a marble heart.

"One, more determined than the rest, pursued me. Each year on the annual visit of the company, he would return to me. He was different from the rest of his class. His perseverance I could but admire. Each time, when I would send him off without one word of hope, he would say:

"'While there is life there is *hope* for me—if you love no one else.'

"A few days before I sent you that cruel note I had been with a servant, who was sent for me to get up a new dress for one of the female members of the circus. It was wanted that evening. I hurried up to the room, followed by the servant, and went in without knocking. I thought I noticed an embarrassment among the occupants, but it soon passed off. I had hardly seated myself, when Mademoiselle B. excused herself, she said, for a few moments, and taking the hand of a little girl, was about leaving the room.

"I caught a glimpse of the child's face; in a second the past rushed before me. The child's face was a miniature likeness of you.

"I got through my work, and returned home. I felt perfectly sure it was your child.

"The next idea that took possession of me was to be near the child. I loved the little one the moment I gazed in the brown eyes.

"I determined to marry the man who had wooed me so often.

"I told him of the past, and promised him only a poor return for his devotion. I knew he was *true* and good.

"We went to Europe. Every day I became more attached to little Clarice, as they called the child. She was the pride of the company, so apt and so graceful. She was claimed by Master Rudolph, the principal rope-dancer. I had been with the company a year when I became a mother. God blessed me with a little girl. As the little head nestled close to my breast, a strange warmth entered, melting the ice that had surrounded my heart so long. Yes; my heart glowed again with love. I knew then what Mena must have suffered in the loss of her little one.

"As I gazed on the eyes which looked into mine, I thought they were wondering at my hard, wicked heart. My eyes grew dim; I shed the first tears for many years. I knelt and prayed to God for forgiveness for the past, and to make me worthy of the precious boon intrusted to my care.

"I arose a changed woman. I thought my baby's eyes had lost their wondering gaze, and now looked satisfied and loving.

"Oh! thank God for little children. They soften the heart, they bring forth all the purer feelings of our nature, they draw us near our Maker. I told my husband all my suspicions. That the little Clarice was your son. I gained his consent to help me to gain the truth, and if possible restore him to you. He knew nothing whatever of the

child's entry there. He was told she belonged to Master Rudolph, and thought it all true.

"I had gained considerable influence with many of the company—particularly Rudolph. He had been very ill at one time. I nursed him; and he fancied I had saved his life. My husband thought I had better appeal directly to him, tell him I knew the child, and so on.

"This I did. At last he admitted the way he obtained him. He was bribed by the master of the company, and received five hundred dollars. The beauty and activity of the boy had met the eye of the bad man, and he knew there was a fortune in him. I pleaded long for the child. I led his mind back to his own childhood, and his dead mother. I conquered.

"He would do his best for me. But how to get over the matter. He must have time to arrange it.

"But Heaven willed a speedy decision. There was terror in the circus camp that night. Master Rudolph had received a fatal injury and was dying. I was sent for. I knew what he wanted. I immediately sent for an American clergyman, and proceeded to the dying man. He caught my hand, and drew me down close to his side, and whispered:

"'Is there any need of exposure? I will him and everything I have to you, to do with as you choose. Will that do?'

"I consulted with my husband; he said it would be all that would be necessary.

"The minister wrote the will. It was signed, and duly witnessed. In a few hours the repentant man had passed from earth. We were in France at the time. My husband finished his engagement, and bid adieu to the life he was never satisfied with. and we hastened to our native land."

"But my child! Where, oh, where is he?" burst from the father's lips.

"Wait," she said, and gliding from the room, she soon returned, holding by the hand little Harry.

The little one seemed bewildered by the caresses bestowed upon him. He gazed long and earnestly on the joyous face of the man clasping him so tightly. He seemed struggling hard to recall something.

Another figure enters. The boy's eyes expand, the little bosom heaves, up go the little hands, and "Mamma!" bursts from his lips. He clung for a moment to her, then, returning, said:

"I know Papa!"

The happy parents, lost in joy over their returned treasure, had not missed Estelle. She had gone as quietly as she came.

George rushed out to find her, and pour into her ears his words of deep thankfulness. But she was gone; he never saw her again. Returning, he again clasped his boy to his breast, when the boy exclaimed:

"Oh! don't, papa, it hurts——"

"What hurts, my darling?" he asked.

"The box in my bosom; Estelle put it there," and he drew it forth.

His father, opening it, found some trinkets, presents to the child, and a draft on a New York bank for five thousand dollars, payable to George Whitwell, and a little slip of paper, saying:

"The amount bequeathed to Harry Whitwell by Rudolph Ferarer."

A little note saying:

"I have brought you peace; let it enter your hearts. You both love your child. Love one another."

The little arms clasped them both in one loving embrace.

“ We will begin life anew, my wife,” solemnly spoke the father, kneeling, passing his arm around her, and drawing her down beside him, “ by thanking God for his wondrous kindness, asking forgiveness for the past, help for the future, and above all, blessings upon her, whose *revenge* will surely meet the approval of Heaven.”

RETALIATION.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see ;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.—POPE.

“LISTEN, Mr. Marbury! Let me try to prove to you I am not so guilty as you think.”

“I know, of course not ; no gentleman intends to be dishonest, but it is to be regretted that public opinion will not see it in that light,” replied the junior partner of an extensive mercantile firm in the city of notions.

“Too true ; if you, knowing me for the last ten years, will not believe me, how can I expect ought else from strangers. Here I have been, under your eye, with the charge of the books for this long time, and never have failed to give entire satisfaction to all, until now. If you had not discovered this, I should have been able to replace the amount before the end of the year. I know now that I did wrong ; but in the frenzy of my despair I did not think it wrong. Mr. Marbury, have mercy ! do not expose me to the firm ! Only keep this knowledge you have gained until January, then, if I have not returned the amount, with interest, I will not ask for further forbearance,” pleaded the young man.

“Everett Morse, it matters little what I believe. I care not whether you are innocent or guilty. Fate has thrown you in my power, and I glory in it. I have no love for you. Years ago you crossed my path, and have almost, if not en-

tirely, blasted all my hopes of happiness. Clara Dayton smiled on *me*, until she met you. Since then you have occupied the position I had hoped to gain. Promise to leave town, to resign all hopes of Clara's hand, and I will have mercy. Hear me out: I will give you as much time as you wish, to return the money, and will also make an arrangement to send you to Europe, on business for the firm. I had intended going myself, but this affair has changed my plans somewhat. Now, sir, you have my answer. You must either conclude to give up your 'lady-love,' or stand before the world a felon."

"Mercy! Mr. Marbury, is this mercy? Oh, heaven pity me! How can I give her up! You do not mean it!"

"When Clara Dayton hears the man who has sought her love stands before the world branded with dishonesty, she will most likely release you from this task. It will be a severe blow to her proud nature."

"She will never believe it. I will go to her, and tell her all. Mr. Marbury let me tell *you* how I was so sorely tempted, and yielded. You have heard that when my father died, he left his affairs very much embarrassed. The old homestead was mortgaged. This has been a great grief to my mother. She thought of losing this home, most valuable for the loved associations connected with it. You know, too, that my brother and I have been trying to redeem this property. The last note was due, I could not meet the payment. This has been a trying year to me. My mother's illness has very much increased my expenses; then, worse still, my brother's misfortune in breaking his right arm, has of course prevented his attending to his engraving. So the whole burden has been on me. I felt sure that as soon as Abbott could return to his work, I should be able to return the loan, as I considered it. Fatal mistake! I now see that any swerving from the right path

is certain to bring its punishment. But will you not, for the sake of my poor widowed mother, spare me? It will kill her to hear I am even suspected of dishonesty, she is so feeble now. Do not demand this terrible sacrifice of me. Be just! be generous! be merciful!"

"'Tis useless, sir. I have told you on what terms I can treat with you. I love Clara more than my own life, and cannot relinquish the chance of winning her. It will be impossible for you to remove the suspicion that will follow you. The fact of your employer's want of confidence in you will be sufficient to condemn you. Accept my terms. Go to Europe without seeing Clara again. Take your own time to return the money, and at the end of one year, if I have failed to win her, you are free to seek her anew, and I will give you my word never to mention this affair again."

"I see too plainly I have no other chance. If Clara loves me, as I have hoped, she will remain constant, regardless of appearances, for that time. Thank Heaven, I have not sought to bind her by an engagement. Every chance is against me, though. What will she think of my leaving without telling her good-bye, even?"

"Just what I wish her to—that you do not love her any too devotedly. I will take your regrets to her, of 'pressure of business, and time,' and such little excuses. Of course she will be mortified, and disappointed, and in this state of her feelings I hope to triumph. Once mine, I do not doubt being able to make her love me. Such love as mine must meet a response."

"Be it so, George Marbury, but there's a future, thank God. A time when we shall both stand before a just Judge. Are you not fearful you may yet need the mercy you now deny to me? If not on earth, you surely will above.

“Clara, my daughter, why will you treat Mr. Marbury with so much indifference? He is a very fine young man, and seems very much attached to you. There was a time, when I thought you liked him a little. I think you thought more of Everett Morse than he deserved. It is very evident, if he had loved you, he would not have gone away without saying a word. Banish him from your mind, and try to smile on one whose long devotion merits some kindness from you.”

“Mother, I cannot help thinking there is some mystery relative to Everett’s leaving as he did. I feel perfectly sure he loved me. Every word and action told it plainly. Every moment that was not devoted to business, or his mother, he spent with us. We were not engaged, but there was an understanding between us. Only the night I last saw him, he said to me, ‘when I come again I shall bring a ring to place on the finger of a certain lady fair, and try to win from her a promise, which will make me one of the happiest men on earth.’ Six months have passed since then, and not a word from him. That he is living, and well, I know, for Mr. Marbury told me they had a letter from him by the last steamer. What can he mean, mother?”

“There is no doubt of one thing: he has trifled with you, and therefore is not worthy of one thought or regret. Clara, Mr. Marbury has spoken to me, and asked my approval and influence in his favor. I believe he will make you a kind, loving husband. He is wealthy, and will place you in a position worthy of you. I wish very much you would accept him. You know how hard a struggle it is for me to keep up a respectable appearance. Your brother must continue his studies, which are very expensive. After he graduates, it will probably be a long time before he can get sufficient practice to enable him to help us. Our little

is dwindling fast away, and it is absolutely necessary for you to take some thought for the future."

"Have patience, mother, dear; bear with me a little longer! When another six months have passed away, if I have not heard from Everett, then I will relieve your mind and make Mr. Marbury as happy as a withered heart can. Let me have a year, mother, to recover from my lost love. Custom, you know, allows that time to those whose hearts are with the dead. If Everett is false, then he is dead to me. I will, no doubt, like Mr. Marbury very well; as a friend, I respect him very much now. You may bid him hope, but nothing more, just yet.

Days, weeks, months rolled rapidly past, but no tidings came to the anxious, waiting heart. Still the dead silence continued.

Two weeks, only, remain of the allotted time. Never had days passed so slowly to George Marbury.

Oh, the dreadful suspense! What if, after all his plotting, he should fail to win her! He must make another appeal to Mrs. Dayton.

All is joy now. She consents to be his. A few more days pass by, and, at length, but one more remains. But what cares he! Standing before the altar, clasping the hand of her he would have risked salvation to gain, he is supremely happy.

Slowly the man of God proceeds, each word binding them closer. With increased solemnity came the words, "Wilt thou, forsaking all others, keep thee only to him, as long as both of ye shall live!"

What inspiration caused her to raise her eyes, glance over, seek and find a face amidst the many there, whose every feature spoke to her heart, and answered the oft repeated inquiry! Yes, he *had* loved her *ever*, and now. But why his mysterious silence?

She heard no more. Lower drooped her beautiful head, paler grew the sweet lips. A strong, firm arm clasped and supported her trembling form.

A few more moments, and friends are crowding around. With a powerful effort she arouses her almost paralyzed faculties, and gracefully receiving the many kind wishes, she smilingly bids adieu, and is led away—enters the carriage, and is soon on her way to New York, to take passage on the steamer about to sail for Europe.

Clara Dayton was a girl of pure principles and great depth of character. She immediately recognized the only path to find and secure peace and happiness.

It was now her duty, she knew, to fulfil the vows she had made—to love and honor the man she had consented to call her husband.

To this end she bent all her energies. By nature piously inclined, she sought and obtained guidance and assistance from the throne of Grace.

Time passed on; children gathered around her; little arms fondly caressing, rosy lips ever lisping words of love, filled the mother's heart to overflowing. There was no room for regrets.

Mother's love, so pure and holy, had chased all other thoughts away. It was no longer a task to learn to love her husband. It was perfectly natural to love him her little darlings clung around and called "papa."

Nothing had she ever heard of Everett Morse, except that he had returned about the time of her marriage, settled up his business, and then resigned his connection with the firm.

George Marbury was happier than he ever thought to be. The doubt which had clouded the early days of his marriage had entirely passed away. At times, when gazing on his wife's beautiful face, beaming with content and happi-

ness, he would wonder if it were possible she had ever loved the man from whom he had won her. The means by which he obtained this great blessing never troubled his conscience at all.

When his, he lavished on her everything that wealth could purchase—maintaining her in a style of such elegance that many were the whispered predictions that such reckless extravagance could not last a great while.

As the years roll past, anxiety, grief and disappointment enter the home where content, joy and hope had dwelt so long.

Their eldest child, a handsome, bright, intelligent youth of nineteen years, proved no longer a source of comfort and happiness.

Reared in the lap of luxury, cradled in idleness, subject to little, if any restraint, he followed the bent of his inclinations, and found pleasure among the youths of the wildest and most reckless habits.

Constantly were his parents' hearts wrung with the fear of coming evil.

At last it came, striking a terrible blow, particularly to the proud-hearted father.

With all his boy's faults he had never feared dishonesty. That was impossible for his son.

But so it was. Fate had decided that the brand of forgery should rest upon the hitherto spotless name of Marbury. For nearly a year this youth had occupied a position in a large importing house, and had won the confidence of his employers. Intrusted frequently to draw from the bank various sums of money, he became very familiar with the signature of the principal of the firm.

The dreadful infatuation of the gaming-table had lured him from the paths of honor and honesty.

Constant losses had made him reckless, and from time to

time he drew on the bank for small sums, hoping each night that luck would smile on him, and he should be able to return the money.

It grew worse and worse. Larger sums were drawn to meet the emergencies, till at last the day of reckoning came.

* * * * *

“Father, dear; do go up in Dayton’s room and see what is the matter with him. He rushed in a few moments ago when I was arranging his room, and is now packing his travelling bag. He will not tell me what is the matter or where he is going. He seems terribly agitated,” exclaimed Georgette Marbury, rushing into the library, where her father sat reading.

Before he could reach the door she cried out again:

“Haste, father, he is coming down; do stop him, here he is!”

With hasty strides her father reaches the hall door, in time to place his hand upon his son, and ask:

“Dayton, my son, what means this agitation, this haste? Where are you going, what is the matter?”

“Father, let me pass! Do not detain me—nor question! You will know too soon. Let me go quick before it is too late. Open the door, or I will soon end my disgrace. Thank Heaven, I have the means of escape!” and he placed his hand in his bosom.

A quick, light step was sounding through the hall, and soon the erring youth was caught and clasped tightly in loving arms, the wildly throbbing head pillowed on the mother’s devoted breast, and with gentle, encouraging words she drew him into the room.

“Where would you, my boy, find surer help in this hour of need, than from your parents. Come, my husband, let us stand by our boy. Tell him, though all the world con-

demn and desert him, we will do our best to save him. What is it? Speak, my child, do not fear; your mother's heart is strong enough to hear the worst, and brave enough to bear all, for those she loves. Father, speak to your boy."

"My son, let us know the worst. You have your mother's promise of help. I will do all she wishes."

"Oh, you may save me from imprisonment, but the terrible shame for you to bear. Your name borne by a forger!" gasped forth the guilty youth.

"Old Truman will have no mercy. I heard him say that when he discovered the guilty one, he would make an example of him," he continued.

Swiftly flew the thoughts of the father back to the time, long years ago, when another young man stood before him, writhing under his relentless hand. And now comes back to him the long-forgotten words:

"Do you not fear you may need the mercy you now deny to me?"

At last he hoarsely whispered:

"The amount! tell me!"

"Five thousand dollars! Father, you can easily fix *that*, but the shame," he answered, unconsciously probing still deeper and deeper the wounded man.

"My wife, you will have to suffer more than this disgrace. For years I have been living beyond my means. I cannot meet *this*, but only by withdrawing from the firm. This property and everything else is no longer mine, nor has it been for three years past. I have tried to keep this from you, hoping I could manage these difficulties until Uncle Jacob's death. I feared that if the strange old man should know I was no longer prosperous, he would destroy his will, and cut me entirely off. Now if he hears of this, I fear the consequence."

"Oh! this is a severe blow."

A loud ring came from the hall door, and a girlish voice softly said:

"Papa! there is a gentleman in the next room, who wishes to see you, and he asked if Dayton was home."

"After me, I know! Father, let me go away. I have money enough to carry me out of the country," pleaded the boy.

"Remain with your mother, I will see this gentleman, and try to make terms with him."

"God bless you, my husband, do not think of me, think only of your son, and your name."

"Mr. Marbury, I am here on very unpleasant business. I hope, however, to give you some comfort. Your son is with you, I hear; I was fearful he had fled. He has told you, I think, of his trouble," said the stranger.

"You are right, sir. The amount I can return, that is nothing; but Oh, God! the disgrace! Can I hope for any mercy? Can any thing induce Mr. Truman to spare us *that*?"

"Mr. Marbury, I am a man of few words, and wish not to prolong your sufferings. I have plead with Mr. Truman for your son. He is a stern, rather hard man; but I think I have induced him to yield. He is under obligation to me, in fact, only my representative; the capital is mine. When he became aware of this unhappy business, he immediately telegraphed for me,—before he had ascertained the guilty one. This affair is known only to Mr. Truman, the book-keeper, and myself, and I am here this morning, to pledge to you, sir, that this knowledge shall go no further. Relieve your mind, your son's and your wife's. The name of Marbury shall remain spotless."

"How can I ever thank you! On what terms is this mercy granted us. I will be ready to meet them, immediately."

“I have made all the necessary arrangements. I know you are a proud man, therefore I will not release your son from the payment of this money. I must insist however that he shall pay it. Here are notes which he must sign. You will see I have made them in ten payments; yearly. This will be five hundred each year. I have an object in this. it will arouse him; give him something to work for, bring forth his self-respect, and more than all, will make a man of him. I am a queer fellow, you may think, but I choose to try this experiment. For years past I have been making myself happy, by doing little kindnesses for friends—people who loved me. This time I thought I would try how much happier I should be in doing good to him ‘who hated and spitefully used me.’”

“What can you mean? Who are you? Why have you acted thus?” asked the astonished man.

“I feel a deep sympathy for your son, Mr. Marbury, because in years gone by I was tempted, and yielded. I plead with one for mercy, and it was granted me. *You* know at what cost. More than all, I could not suffer Clara Dayton’s son should wear the brand of shame! Do you not know me George Marbury? Has time and the grey hairs altered me, so much?”

“Everett Morse! Just Heaven, how mysterious are thy ways! Yes, I spared you, but for a dreadful sacrifice. Forgive, oh! Forgive me! Oh! how prophetic were your words,” burst from the lips of the humiliated man.

“I do forgive you—have, long years ago. I have known she was happy with you, and I was content. Will you some time, when you best can, let her know how it was I lost her? Is this asking too much?”

“How can I? This is a severe task, but be it as you wish.”

The door opened, and Clara stood before them.

Going up to the bowed man, she raised his head, pressed her lips to the burning brow, and then holding out her hand to Everett Morse, she said :

“Nay, he need not tell me; I know *all*. I have heard from the next room. To you, of all the world, I would sooner be indebted for this great kindness. I know how good and noble you are, but I cannot find it in my heart to censure him, whose only fault was through his loving me so much.”

Both men were answered—yes, satisfied. The look she bent on each, told to one her true appreciation and gratitude, to the other—that *he* alone she loved.

Little more remains to tell: many years have passed, and Dayton Marbury stands before the world, beloved and respected by his fellow men. Many are the speculations concerning the great intimacy and devoted friendship between the old bachelor and this young man, but to few is known the true reason why they love each other thus.

OUR CAPRICIOUS PET.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

She is active, stirring, all fire,
Cannot rest, cannot tire,
To a stone she had given life.—BROWNING.

“Good bye, Lottie darling. Write soon and often, and above all, do not get so infatuated with fashionable life in town, that you will not be contented in your quiet country home again.”

“Never fear, mother dear. Most likely before the expiration of the time allowed for my visit, I shall be not only willing, but anxious to return to home and you. I am very sure my fine lady aunt will never be able to make a fashionable young miss of me. So don't be surprised if she gets disgusted and starts me back home in a very short time. Good bye, aunt Cloe.”

“Good bye, Miss Lottie, honey. Hope you'll ketch a husban and a fortun in town. Not like yer mar. She went to town, ketched a husban, and lost a fortun. I kin tell yer, honey, how yer mus do. Mine now, yer fine yer mar's old uncle Hiram, and when he sees dat smilin face of yourn, he'll forgit all his bad feelins ginst yer mar. And dat's de way yer fine de fortun. Mine, I profecise dat. Ole Cloe's words nebber fails.”

“Thank you, aunt Cloe, for good wishes. *This* time, I think your prophecy will surely fail. I would like to see my uncle very much and win his love; but I shall not go to him, for *he* might think I was fortune hunting.

“Joe is hurrying me, and says we shall be late if I linger a moment longer. Good bye. Take care of my ducks and chickens.”

Smilingly waving her last adieux, little Lottie Merrill sprang lightly into the old-fashioned carryall. Her brother Joe whipped up the horses into a brisk trot.

They had a distance of two miles to ride to the depot, and during the drive, Joe occupied the time by giving sundry pieces of advice and caution to his sister.

Be it known that this worthy and wise young gentleman was nineteen; having a superiority of two years over his little sister.

He had been up to Baltimore on several occasions, and so his knowledge of travel, and in fact, the world in general, was pretty thorough (in his own opinion).

“Now, Lottie, mind and be very careful of your pocket-book. And do not talk to any one on the cars, because if any of those sharpers find out you are from the country, and not used to travelling, they will be sure to trap and rob you. You hang onto the conductor, he is the only safe one, the only one to be trusted at all. When you get to Philadelphia he will put you under the care of another one, and then you will be all right, for Cousin Julian is to meet you in New York.”

“Remember now what I’ve told you. You see I’ve travelled and know the ropes. They tried to trap me, but I was too old for them. Well here we are at the depot, and not a moment to lose.”

Lottie was in a few more moments dashing rapidly away from her country home. For a while her poor little heart was grieving considerably. She was so sorry to leave her dear mother, who would miss her so much, and Joe, too; how lonesome he would be during the long winter evenings. Poor old Aunt Cloe how much more work she would have to do while she was away!

She felt how very selfish she was in leaving them, and being so anxious to get among her rich relations. Her beautiful blue eyes, usually so laughing and bright, were looking very sad, and her pretty little rosebud of a mouth, wore the expression of a grieved child.

But after awhile the fleeting shadows passed away, and there came visions of the long anticipated visit. How joyous, bright, and exaggerated they were, is known only to country lasses on their journey to make the first visit to town.

Lottie had been up to Baltimore two or three times for a day, with her friends, Col. Brigham's daughters. She had been educated with these young ladies. The Colonel and her father were very dear friends, and he insisted that as he had a governess in his family, Lottie should share with his daughters her instructions. After the death of her father, the Colonel continued his care for his friend's child; so at the age of seventeen Lottie was quite an accomplished young lady, but without a particle of *style*, as her fashionable aunt declared.

Lottie had been working all the Spring and Summer, to raise the requisite amount of money to fit her out for this trip. Very busy had she been, and her adviser and co-worker, aunt Cloe, had disposed of a wonderful amount of eggs, butter, chickens, dried fruit, and so on; much to the disgust of Joe, who did not at all sanction the exporting of these good things. He believed in, and only favored *home consumption*.

Very pretty looked our little heroine, in her travelling suit of blue merino. The coquettish blue velvet hat displaying to great advantage her beautifully rounded head with its wealth of bright brown ringlets. Many were the glances of admiration bent on her, by the occupants of the surrounding seats.

Nothing of much importance transpired to interest her particularly, until she had changed cars, and was *en route* for Philadelphia.

This train chanced to be very much crowded. For several miles, she had shared the seat with an old lady, whose rotundity was of such dimensions, as made it necessary for Lottie to make herself very comfortable in about one-fourth of the seat. However, to her great satisfaction, the old lady took her departure at one of the way stations. But just as she had smoothed out her skirts, and began to feel the luxury of breathing space, she was aroused by a soft, pleasant voice saying :

“ Will you allow me to share your seat ? ”

Looking up, she beheld a tall, graceful gentleman, with large, brilliant dark eyes, and soft, black hair, pushed back from the full, high forehead,—just her idea of a handsome man.

With a pleasant little bow, she made room for him.

Many were the polite attentions he offered her in the way of papers, books, and information relative to the various stopping places. These she received rather coldly, remembering her brother Joe’s advice to “beware of sharpers.”

Surely this splendid looking fellow must be a gentleman, she thought. How she wished she knew if he were honest, so she could hear and talk to him. She wished Joe had kept his advice, and left her to follow her own inclination. When, however, she found out that he was going to New York, and resided there, she was proof no longer against his continued attempts at conversation, and determined she would enjoy his company the rest of the journey, even if it resulted in the loss of her pocket-book. Coming to this conclusion, she talked freely to her delighted listener, who was very much pleased to see this change of action on the part of his fair neighbor.

She told him where she was going, and the name of her relatives, and was much assured, when the suspected individual told her that he had been to college with her cousin Julian; had frequently met the young ladies at parties, and had on one occasion, (the last New Year's day), called at the house, and should in the future, with her permission, be a frequent visitor. It was all right then; she could, and did trust him, and was sorry enough, when they arrived at Jersey City, and were met by Julian Tracy, who formally presented his friend, Doctor Worth.

Whilst crossing the ferry, Lottie laughingly explained her reserve during the first hours of their meeting, by relating Joe's sage advice, much to the amusement of her cousin and Doctor Worth; the latter replying "Your brother was very wise. I feel pretty sure that some one was robbed on our train, of something more valuable than his pocket-book." And he playfully laid his hand over his heart.

Placing her in the carriage waiting, while Julian looked after her baggage, Dr. Worth told her he should take an early opportunity of calling, and expressed the hope that this accidental acquaintance should be of lasting and pleasant continuance. Thanking Julian for the invitation to come soon, and pressing the hand of Lottie, he took his departure.

We shall pass over the meeting with her aunt and cousins, only saying that Mrs. Tracy was well pleased with Lottie's appearance, saying to her elder daughter:

"She is not at all stylish or showy, but piquant and decidedly taking. She will be sure to make an impression on her debut."

And so it proved. This new star in the firmament of fashionable society, quite dazzled the eyes, and turned the heads of most of the eligible young men, and indeed, her

very pretty face, combined with her simplicity, the total absence of anything like Art, her confiding, child-like manner, won for her the admiration of the papas, all of whom were willing, indeed anxious to welcome her as a daughter; should his boy be the favored one.

Lottie, to the great dissatisfaction of her aunt, would do as she would.

The principal cause of complaint was her entire disregard of the most devoted and continued attentions of young Percival Fitzhugh. He being the most desirable catch in the city; the only son and heir of a wealthy banker, who, rumor said, had declared his intentions of turning over to his young hopeful the comfortable sum of a million, to commence married life with. Be this as it might, Mrs. Tracy having angled in vain for him, in behalf of her daughter, welcomed the prospect of having him in the family somehow.

She could keep quiet no longer, and proceeded to remonstrate with Lottie.

"I am astonished at you, child! Are you going to throw away the chance that most all the girls would gladly seize? Young Fitzhugh is very much pleased with you. Just think of the splendid establishment he would place you at the head of," she said.

"Can't help it, auntie. I don't like Fitz. I am very sorry if he has any idea of offering such inducements to me. But I really think you are mistaken. He is in love only with himself," replied Lottie.

"It is of no use suggesting such brilliant prospects to Lottie, ma; for it is very plain to see to whom her heart is turning, if not entirely gone. Dr. Worth is the favored one. I admire your taste, little cousin; the doctor is a splendid fellow. I should likely enough have felt my heart in danger long ago, if it had not been guarded by two

strong barriers: one being the fact of his unmistakable devotion to yourself; showing plainly how hopeless my case would be. The other quite as formidable. He is too poor even to think of marrying. He has nothing in the world but his profession, and has a widowed mother to support. It seems too hard that Fortune should have treated so shabbily one on whom Nature had bestowed so bountifully her good gifts," said May Tracy.

Lottie, humming a merry air, tripped lightly out of the room, deigning no reply. I think she dared not venture on this subject for fear of revealing what was hidden in the deepest recesses of her heart; the secure possession of which she no longer held. It was fluttering like a frightened bird, doubting, waiting only to be wooed to fly and find a haven in the bosom of young Richard Worth.

"Joe's words *were* prophetic. But not in the light he meant," she whispered smilingly to herself. "I believe I *was* trapped and robbed in the railway cars; but to save me I cannot regret it."

Lottie had been with her aunt about a month, when a very remarkable event took place, which much affected her future welfare. But I must not anticipate.

Her cousins, May and Florence, had made an engagement for her to sit for a picture at a celebrated photograph gallery.

The day was beautifully clear and bright—but bitterly cold. Lottie declared she would not go if they ordered the carriage.

"It was too hard on the poor horses, and the driver had a terrible cold besides. It was really useless, and she wanted to look at the pretty things on the way. If they got tired they could ride in the cars. She liked the fun of that, too."

So she carried her way, and they departed, accompanied by their constant attendant, Mr. Fitzhugh.

Lunch was waiting for their return. At last they came.

"Where is Lottie?" was the universal question.

"Indeed, ma, Lottie is the most wilful and determined girl I ever saw, and does the strangest things. You might just as well try to stop the wind blowing as to stop her when she makes up her mind to do anything," exclaimed May.

"Well, tell us where she is. I'll venture all my worldly goods, that whatever she has done is good and kind—yes, and proper too," said Julian, who was very much attached to Lottie, in a cousinly way.

"I'll tell you what she did, and then you will see how proper it was. Where she is, we don't know.

"After we got through down town, Flory complained of being tired, and so we determined to ride home. Mr. Fitzhugh was going to engage a carriage, when Lottie insisted on going in the cars, and off she flew and jumped in one just passing. Of course we had to follow.

"The car was quite crowded, and when we had gone a few blocks, there came in an old man, miserably dressed, with a large carpet-bag. Up sprang Lottie, and putting her arms around him, placed him tenderly and comfortably in her seat. Mr. Fitzhugh made her take his, then.

"I was mortified enough. I was fearful the people might think he was something to us. We rode on, and I was beginning to feel a little more comfortable, when the car stopped and the old man was making his way out; judge of my horror and amazement when she whispered to me:

"'I will be on presently. I'm going to help this old gentleman a little way with his luggage. It is so slippery he might fall.'

"The last we saw of her, she was holding him up as he crossed the street."

"Now, Julian, what do you think of this *proper* behavior?"

"Why, May, there is nothing really wrong about it. Lottie is decidedly something different from the modern young ladies. Very impulsive, acting directly from the promptings of a pure, kind heart. The direct cause of her action to-day I think you may attribute to reverence and veneration," answered her brother.

"Here comes the truant now. Come, answer for yourself, little one. Here are grave complaints against you. You are charged with violating all the rules regulating the conduct, airs, and graces of town-bred ladies. We will have to send you back to the country, for we shall never be able to make a fine young lady of you," said Julian.

Lottie glanced quickly, saw the merry twinkle in the eye of her cousin, and understood him. Turning to her aunt she said :

"Aunty, I'm sorry if I have displeased you, but I do not regret an action of common humanity. I have sins enough to answer for, without adding one for wilful neglect of an aged person. I've returned safely, and feel satisfied and happy."

"How far did you escort your protégé, Lottie, and how did he receive your attentions?" asked Flory.

"Not very far; he insisted on my leaving him, but I did not until I saw a pleasant-looking German boy, standing doing nothing; so I slipped fifty cents in his hand, and asked him to go home with the old gentleman and keep him from slipping down. He thanked me many times, asked my name, and where I lived; and when I bade him good-bye, he said, 'Heaven bless you, you are a good child, and I feel sure that this kind act will be remembered by you very pleasantly as long as you live. When you pray, ask that grace may be sent from above, to comfort and soften a lonely, hard-hearted old man. Good-bye! we may meet again,' and so I left him; and, indeed, I could hardly help

crying, I felt so sorry for him. He is a gentleman, I know for he talks so well."

Weeks passed on, and Lottie's visit was near its close. Rumor said (and it was generally believed) that Dr. Worth had won from Lottie the consent to be his. One young friend, wiser than others, had declared that she knew it to be a positive fact that Lottie had said she was too young to marry yet awhile, and could very well afford to wait until the doctor should be in circumstances to justify his marrying. How true this was, I cannot tell, but feel perfectly safe in asserting that there was a happy and perfect understanding between the two.

It was her last day. On the morrow, she was to bid adieu to her kind friends and loving relatives.

They were all loitering over the breakfast-table, when the servant brought Lottie a little note. Opening it, she read aloud :

"My good child, come to the old man you were kind to. The bearer has a carriage, and will wait for you.

"Let your cousin or some friend accompany you."

"This is *very* strange. You are not going, Lottie?" said May and Flora, simultaneously.

"Yes, she is, I see," said Julian, "and I will, with pleasure, go with her. There is something more in this than we can see."

They were soon on their way. After about a half-hour's ride, they stopped before a large, old-fashioned, gloomy-looking brick house. The driver opened the carriage-door, and said :

"Here is the place, sir."

Helping Lottie out and up the stone steps, Julian was about to raise the handle of the dusty knocker, when the door was suddenly opened by an old woman, who said :

"Come in, Miss. The master has been waiting for you."

Opening a door upon the first floor, she ushered them in.

Seated in a large easy chair, paler and thinner than when she last saw him, was the old man—Hiram Watson—for so it proved to be. Holding out his hand, he said :

"I knew you would come, my good child. You are very like your mother was, at your age. Ah, I see you are looking surprised, but I knew your mother well. Can you remember ever hearing her speak of her Uncle Hiram?"

"Oh yes, often. Are you Uncle Hiram? I am so glad to know you!"

Springing, she pressed her lips to his withered brow, and seated herself at his feet, saying :

"Speak to Julian, my cousin, won't you, uncle?"

"Excuse me, sir—I was so engaged with this dear child, that I've been very negligent. I am glad to meet you. Be seated, sir."

Turning again to Lottie, he said :

"Providence ordained that I should meet you, Lottie, and feel the influence of your loving kindness. I have been quite sick since I last saw you, but with God's blessing and the kind attendance of the good doctor, I am much better now, and the doctor says I am able to travel a little. I want to go home with you, little one.

"I'm so lonesome, I want to finish my days with your mother. Do you think she will welcome me?"

"Yes, yes, uncle—she loves you, I know. She wanted I should try to find you, but——"

"But what, my dear?"

"I was afraid you would think I was fortune hunting, so I would not try to find you," said she, blushing deeply.

"Well, my child, Heaven willed that you should. Ah, here is my friend and doctor: my niece, Miss Merrill—Doctor Worth."

Richard Worth was standing transfixed with wonder. Lottie and Julian were very much enjoying his surprise. At last, he recovered himself, and exclaimed :

“Why, Lottie, is it possible?”

“And I must say, why, Doctor, is it possible that you know my niece?” said Uncle Hiram.

“Yes, sir, I am fortunate in the possession of such a great pleasure,” said the doctor, casting a look of pride and love towards Lottie.

“If I could read looks, I should say you knew each other well, and liked each other better. I am glad, very glad. I think I shall attempt match-making once more, and meet with a happier result this time. Doctor, this dear child’s mother was my niece and adopted daughter. I brought her from Maryland, educated her, and wanted to marry her to my ward, but she chose differently. I have never seen her since. This little one has made it all right now. I am going home with her, and after a little while, if you should follow, and ask our consent, I think neither she nor I would say nay. And Uncle Hiram’s wedding presents will be no mean dowry, but a worthy setting for so pure and valuable a gem as this,” patting Lottie’s head.

The charming look of gratitude, and the warmth with which the young doctor pressed his hand, was a sufficient answer for the old uncle.

Lottie’s departure was postponed for a few days, and then, accompanied by her uncle, she returned to her country home. The welcome which greeted the old man was so earnest and loving, that he was fully satisfied that his remaining days would be very happy there.

With every month came young Worth, urging Lottie for a speedy union; and before another year had passed he came once more, bringing Julian, his mother and sisters. There was a quiet little wedding.

After the ceremony Uncle Hiram placed a packet in his niece's hand; which opening, she found a document putting her in the immediate possession of fifty thousand dollars.

Aunt Cloe, hearing this, left her kitchen, at the risk of burning her waffles, to dart into the parlor, and exclaim, to the amusement of all:

"Old Cloe's words nebber fails. Didn't I profecise that you'd ketch a husban' and a fortun'! What you dun say now?" and she made her exit amidst peals of laughter.

"I say it is better to be born 'lucky than rich,'" said Joe.

"I say Lottie was born *both*," said Julian. "Lucky, you will *all* admit; and also *rich*, in the possession of the truest, rarest qualities of a good, pure heart."

Lottie's and the doctor's example was followed by others.

Julian, to Lottie's great joy, wooed and won her dear friend, the elder Miss Bingham. May succeeded in catching young Fitzhugh; and Flory's bright eyes made such sad havoc on the heart of the young minister who presided at Lottie's wedding, that report says she is about to try and heal the wounds she inflicted.

ONLY A COMMA.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

A lie that is half a truth is ever the worst of lies ;
A lie that is all a lie can be met and fought with outright ;
But a lie that is half a truth is a harder matter to fight.—TENNYSON.

IN the elegant boudoir of the beautiful and wealthy Mrs. Carlton may be seen a little gem of art—a painting of water-colors, the design of which has long been a subject of speculation and much interest to many friends, particularly to her daughter, a little Miss of fourteen years, who had often pleaded to know what it meant.

The single word, *Only*, is painted in letters formed by the entwining of the graceful myrtle, the beautiful forget-me-not, and here and there, almost hidden, falls a spray of the drooping hop-vine.

In answer to the many inquiries concerning this picture, Mrs. Carlton would say :

“That little word was a pet of mine, long years ago. If you will think on it, you will know how *little*, yet oh ! how *much* it may express. So it was a whim of mine to paint it in flowers of love and remembrance.

Sometimes some one brighter than the others, or a young girl, just fresh from her floral dictionary, would spy out and remark—

“Oh ! Mrs. Carlton, but I notice, almost hidden among the flowers a spray of the hop-vine. That seems hardly in keeping with the others ! You know *that* tells of Injustice !”

Perhaps a hardly discernible expression of annoyance flits over the fair face. But she answers pleasantly:

"I might have thought of that. But I wanted something more to give a finish to the letters, and so I trained in a few of those little sprays. Never thinking," she added with a smile, "it would meet the eye of so severe a critic."

This reply might have been satisfactory to many. But the one for whom it was intended, came to the conclusion there was more in the hop-vine than Mrs. Carlton cared to tell, at any rate to her.

"Mamma dear, do tell me to-day, just now, all about that flowery picture. I am so anxious to know. I am sure I am old enough to understand it now. There was an incident which took place in school to-day, which makes me more than ever anxious to know all about it. Miss May, who has charge of our drawing class, has gone home, and in her place we have a stranger. She gave me a flower piece to work on. Among the various kinds were 'forget-me-nots.' I mentioned your having a painting of those, and went on to tell her of the curiosity it caused. Then I said you had told me it was a 'heart's history of the past.' She seemed very much interested, indeed, quite agitated. She asked me my name! When I answered, she turned quite pale, and I thought she would faint. I heard her murmur, 'How very strange;' and often during the afternoon I noticed her gazing on me very earnestly, and sadly too, I think. To save me, mamma, I cannot divest my mind of the idea that she is in some way connected with your picture!" said Carrie Carlton, who had just entered her mother's room, on returning from school.

"Her name, dear! Do you know?"

"Yes, mamma! Miss Davenport."

"Davenport! Evelyn! Yes, it must be! It is very strange! You are right, my child. Miss Davenport is

connected with that *little word*. Once thoughtlessly spoken, wilfully misinterpreted and wickedly repeated, caused a great deal of sorrow and suffering to one who was very near to me. Again, when sadly breathed forth, it fell on a sympathetic ear, entered a warm, true heart, found and brought forth hope, love, protection! Oh! my child, when I gaze on that picture, every leaf of those sweet flowers seem whispering reminders of so much love and sympathy, and trying to cluster round and hide from view those other sprays which are drooping low, burdened with a weight of the direst injustice. Yes, dear, I will tell you the story, hoping that it may prove not only one of interest, but one from which you may draw a lesson for future profit.

“Seventeen years ago, in this city, lived a young girl struggling with the hard, cold world for a support for herself and widowed mother. Although liberally educated, and possessing many accomplishments, she could gain no assistance from these means. Her mother was an invalid, requiring almost constant care; therefore Ellenor (we will call her) could avail herself of none of the various offers as governess or teacher. Either of these positions would remove her from home. So her only resource was the needle. While thus employed, she could still watch over and care for her suffering parent.

“In this employment she was, for a time, very successful. Her patrons were among the élite of the city. One of them was Mrs. C., a lady of kind heart, great liberality, and immense wealth.

“Ellenor Deering was very frequently at the home of this lady—going for and returning with work—frequently remaining through the day, during which time her absence from her mother was supplied by Mrs. C.’s maid, a kind, experienced, and worthy woman.

“Mrs. C.’s family consisted of two young misses, aged

twelve and fourteen years, a young girl, named Evelyn Davenport, the orphan daughter of a very dear friend of Mrs. C.'s, and the betrothed wife of young Dr. C., the only son and centre of all his mother's hopes.

"It was her dearest wish to unite her son with her friend's child; and to this end she bent all her energies. So far as a betrothal she had succeeded.

"Often during Ellenor's presence in this family, she met Dr. C., whose manner to the poor seamstress was ever respectful and very kind.

"When he was near she almost forgot, for the time, that she was not one of their friends or associates. *He* not only rendered her respect, but enforced it on the other members of the family.

"Evelyn Davenport was very much inclined to make Ellenor know and feel her inferior position, and, to use her own words, 'keep her in a seamstress's place.'

"Often she was checked in her haughty airs, and condescending manner, by a glance from the clear, honest eye, which expressed so plainly his disapproval of such a spirit. The spirit of Christianity shone forth in all the acts of this noble man.

"He had earnestly desired to enter the ministry. But his parents would not hear of it. He must enter the medical world—follow his father's profession. He acquiesced, saying:

" 'Perhaps it is better so. For in no work, has a man such a wide field for usefulness, as in the practice of medicine. He could not only comfort the mind and ease the body, but properly use his wealth—valueless to him—if he could not share with, and help the needy.' "

"Mrs. C., at one time, prevailed on Ellenor to come to the house every day, for a week or so, to get the girls ready to go to school. The first day of that notable time,

Ellenor's dinner was sent up to her in the sitting-room, where she was engaged in sewing. She thought nothing of it, expecting either that, or to come to the second table with the housekeeper. The next day her mother was not as well as usual, and so she was detained some time beyond the regular hour for presenting herself in the work-room.

"When she reached the house, she went up quietly, and entered, and was getting her sewing out, when her attention was arrested by hearing her name. She listened. In the next moment she heard Mrs. C. saying:

" 'Miss Deering is not coming to-day, I fear. It is quite late.'

" 'She is offended for not being invited to dinner yesterday. I suppose she is so very genteel and worthy (in her own estimation),' said Evelyn Davenport, rather spitefully.

" 'And why should she not be in yours and ours?'

" 'Why was she not at the table, mother? She is refined and modest, and would be, I think, an excellent companion for my sisters. I would have them like her. She would grace the best society. It is her devotion to her mother which places her there. You know it is only because the same Goddess that smiles on you and yours, turns a cold, frowning face towards her. *Fortune alone* makes the difference,' said her son, in warm, earnest tones.

"How those kind words went to the heart, and stamped firmly, and forever, the image of the one who uttered them, you may well imagine.

" 'My son, I have no real objection to Miss Deering's presence at my table, but you know it is not customary, and yesterday we had company—Miss Le Blanc. You know she is so very aristocratic, I don't know what she would have thought of such a thing.'

" 'Oh, Mother! Put away those thoughts and words, so unworthy of your good heart. Act *right*, never fearing or

caring what your friends may say. You are in a position which will enable you to stand above these forms and customs. Think, mother dear, of these two young girls. Take from the *favoured* one, only one possession, and give it to the humble sewing girl, and which then, would you give the preference? Mother dear, it was a real infliction on my patience, yesterday, to sit through the long dinner hour, and to listen to her idle, silly talk. And while I think of her, I remember hearing my dear father say he knew the father of this young lady when he was a little boy, as George White. But when he came in possession of his father's hard-gained gold, there came ideas of grandeur, and so on. He went to Paris for a few years, then returned with the recently acquired knowledge of noble descent, and entered the fashionable world as Le Blanc.

“ ‘Mother, for my sake—for the sake of my dear departed father, who was ever just—come forth! Place *Merit* before *Wealth*. Make up in the future for yesterday's wrong.’

“Then came forth a mocking laugh, and in a scornful voice the words from Evelyn Davenport:

“ ‘Really, Doctor C., you would, no doubt, like to have your mother receive Miss Deering—this piece of elegance and perfection—as a daughter! Upon my word, sir, you are very fond and careful of this young person. I think I will resign in her favor. She is an artful girl. Yesterday you sent her flowers! Yes, and peeled an orange for her! I do not care a straw for your affection, sir, if it is divided with such as she is.’

“There was a silence for some moments, and then Doctor C. answered:

“ ‘Evelyn, what can I say for these *false*—yes, I must say it—and unjust words? I am always with the oppressed, and those needing my help. I did not send her

the flowers, I gave them to her; and she asked if she might give you part. I said "Certainly." About the fruit it is true. I performed that service of pleasure for my mother and you, and do you think I would slight another in the same room, and at the same time? Never! And now let me tell you, dear Evelyn, you must try and conquer this unhappy disposition. Cast forth all unjust thoughts, or we shall never be happy. I would not—dare not, risk your happiness, or mine, by uniting our future, until you rise above your present unhappy disposition. We should be a miserable pair, indeed. I love you, Evelyn; but for some time past I have been watching with sorrow and many misgivings these grave errors. You must not doubt my actions. I would be above reproach. Do this, and be to me the gentle, loving girl of years ago," said Doctor C., earnestly.

"'Never will I try to change my nature for you, sir; and remember you have no right yet to dictate to me!' she angrily replied; and, going out of the room, ran up stairs.

"Ellenor Deering was spell-bound. She knew not what to do, or how to act. She should, she thought, have let them know of her presence; but she was so much astonished, her faculties quite deserted her. So she was unintentionally an 'eavesdropper.'

"Mrs. C. did not come into the room for an hour or so, and then asked, anxiously:

"'How long have you been here?'

"'Some minutes. I am quite late, but mother needed me longer than usual this morning,' answered Ellenor.

"This evasive reply disarmed the fears of Mrs. C., relative to whether their conversation had been heard.

"Ellenor thought it best for the comfort of all parties; and when Mrs. C. came in again, and said:

"'Come, Miss Deering, the dinner-bell is ringing; we

will go down,' she slightly demurred, but the kind manner induced her to accept the apology for the neglect of the previous day, and so things passed on quite pleasantly during the remainder of the week. Evelyn seemed rather better tempered, yet Ellenor thought she could detect an occasional glance of deep malice flash from her dark eye.

"Time passed on. The girls left for school, Doctor C. to finish his course of studies, and Ellenor continued to receive work from Mrs. C. and Miss Davenport.

"One day when the poor girl had gone to return a piece of embroidery to her employers, Evelyn came to have a dress cut. She was waiting when the seamstress came in, but not noticing a visitor, she went up to her mother, and said, joyfully :

" 'Oh, mamma! for that piece of work Mrs. C. paid me ten dollars! Only think of it.'

" 'It is like her. I expected nothing else. Mrs. C. is a very kind, liberal woman,' answered her mother.

"The dress was cut and fitted, and receiving the promise to have it in two days, Evelyn left. A servant came for it, paid the usual price, and brought a little note, saying: 'Mrs. C. would not need Miss Deering's services any longer.'

"Ellenor was amazed at this. She called to ask an explanation from Mrs. C., but was told always that the lady was engaged; and so she knew nothing about the reason for this unkindness.

"One after another of her patrons discharged her, and in a few weeks the once prosperous and happy girl was reduced to real want.

"She knew she should soon be alone in the world. But God was very merciful. With the rapidly declining strength the mind failed too; and the peevish, fretful sufferer became gentle, pleasant, yes, even joyous. She was a

girl again—round her the friends of youth; and every comfort and even luxury, she thought. Thus poor Ellenor was saved from the torture of having her mother sensible to all the surrounding poverty.

“A little longer, and with a beaming smile, which told of a vision of peace and joyous meetings, the mother’s spirit passed from earth. Friends, from the humble walks of life came forth, and with the kind minister performed the sad services for the dead, and tried to comfort the lone one.

“All was over. Sitting bowed with grief, heart and mind away with the absent, she heeded not the deep solitude surrounding her. The gentle knock at the door was unheard. At length a deep, kind voice was sounding in her ear, calling her back to her lonely, desolate life.

“‘Miss Deering!’

“She raised her eyes and beheld Arthur C.”

“Oh, mamma! I know *now*, I thought only one could be so good and kind——’

“Stop, dear, let me finish my story before you begin your comments.

“Bending down and gazing at her with an expression of the deepest sympathy, he took her hand, pressed it and said:

“‘What is it? Speak to me! Tell me what is the trouble?’

“‘*Only* tired of life;—without friends; the *only* one is gone. All alone. *Only* I am left,” wailed forth the stricken girl.

“‘Miss Deering, why have you kept aloof from your friends? Why not have let us know of your sorrow? Do not talk of being friendless. You are not. My mother—my sisters.’

“‘No, no, not now. She sent me off. Oh! for *only* one friendly heart to feel and pity my desolation.’

“ ‘Miss Deering! Ellenor! be comforted. There is some strange mystery concerning my mother’s actions. Yet, if all the world desert, I will be proud to be your friend. Try and be calm, and let us consider this estrangement with my mother. Now while I think of it, I imagine I already have a clue to it. Your sorrowful little word—so often repeated within the last few moments—may serve to explain it—the cause. Forgive me should I pain you, but I must be candid to help you. On my return I noticed your absence, and inquired the cause. My mother answered that you and your mother were very ungrateful—that she had been deceived in both; and when she found out her error, had filled your place by one more worthy. She was convinced of this by your never coming to ask an explanation when she discharged you. I need not tell I did not believe this of you. I determined to find you and learn the truth. For several days since I have been very much engaged, and found it almost impossible to get a leisure hour. Last night I pushed mother somewhat for something more explicit concerning your case, and learned it was from some remarks of yours made in the presence of Miss Davenport, relative to an amount paid you by mother for a piece of embroidery. Evelyn reported that you had entered the room, not noticing her, and said that ‘Mrs. C. had paid you ten dollars *only* for that piece of work,’ and your mother answered ironically, ‘Just like her! *Very* liberal and kind-hearted indeed.’ So you see, my friend, that little word *only* has caused your trouble. I know Evelyn’s faults and weakness, and I fear wickedness. I immediately divined how easily those words could be wilfully misunderstood, and I determined to come to you to-day for the truth.’ ”

“ ‘Oh, thank you for your kindness—your faith in my worthiness. I did use that word, but not as she said: I remember well. Oh, how cruel! how unjust! how wicked!

and how I have suffered from it. I was so delighted with the liberal price paid, and returned joyfully exclaiming, "Mrs. C. paid me ten dollars! only think of it, mamma!" and her words were as you have said, but in a voice of gratitude and truth. I called several times, but was always denied admittance. I saw a strange servant; she would take up my name, then return with the answer, Mrs. C. was engaged and could not see me.'

"'Enough, Miss Deering; it is as I suspected. Evelyn's motive—my mother must know and feel how cruel she has been, and try to redress this terrible injustice. Good-bye for the present; be comforted concerning the future.'

"He was gone. What a weight was lifted from her heavy heart. The mystery was explained. Two or three hours passed on, when she heard a carriage stop in front and then a knock on the door.

"'Come in,' she sadly said, and Mrs. C. was beside her.

"It is useless to detail the explanation, or how very much distressed Mrs. C. really was. She could not forgive herself for judging and condemning thus one without a chance for defence. She said they had had a dreadful scene, and a mortifying, sorrowful explanation, proving Evelyn's falsehood and malice. Arthur had forced it from her.

"'Poor girl! I loved her mother so much, and hoped so to see her the wife of my son. I fear now it is all over between them. Perhaps it is for the best. He is so good and pure, I fear she would never make him happy. She has gone away to her uncle. I have just been to the depot with her. Now, my child, you are to return with me, and take charge of the girls, who are home from school, and insist on remaining so, with you for their teacher. Not a word of objection; I am the suppliant, pleading for *forgiveness*, to prove which you must come with us,' said Mrs. C.

"Ellenor went, and remained for two years, beloved by

all. At the end of which time, Mrs. C., verifying her love and appreciation by the fervent blessing and warm embrace with which she welcomed the orphan to her home and heart, a *daughter*, in *name* and affection."

"Now, mamma, I know *all*. You are Ellenor Deering; I guessed it when you let pa's name slip out."

"Yes, love, you have only heard of and known me as Nellie Moreton; Ellenor Deering was my mother's maiden name. Now, Carrie, let this story warn you against evil speaking, exaggeration, and particularly remember the command, 'Thou shalt not bear false witness.' Evelyn has had a severe reward, I fear, but I have not an unkind feeling for her. I shall call on her, and endeavor to be a friend to her. Her unkindness truly caused me great sorrow, but in the end greater joy. Your dear father has often said that he deeply feels the truth of those blessed words, 'All things work together for *good* to those who love the Lord.'"

THE WARNING.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

“A something light as air—a look—
A word unkind or wrongly taken,
Oh, love! that tempests never shook,
A breath, a touch like this hath shaken.”

VERY beautiful was Clarice De Vere. But to-night the face, usually beaming with hope and joy, wears a look of discontent. There is a scarcely perceptible frown on the fair brow, a tear stealing down the rose-tinted cheek, which she hastily wipes away, and rising from her seat before the mirror, she says :

“No, Ninette, not a jewel to-night; I will do very well. Now give me my gloves and fan.”

“Oh! Mamselle! *do* let me put this beautiful comb, or wind some pearls among your curls! You look so very simple. Something, *please*, to brighten up your dress a little! You look more as if you were dressed for a funeral than a fête. Just a few roses, then! here are some beautiful buds!” pleaded the maid.

“I don’t *feel* bright, Ninette, and I don’t care to *look* so. But if you wish, put a few of those *fuchsias* in my hair.”

With skilful fingers, the dark shining tresses were caught back, and the drooping, scarlet flowers, arranged gracefully in them. Ninette, with a satisfied look, exclaimed :

“Perfect *now*! Beautiful! See, mamselle! But you are not well, I fear!”

“Yes I am; but I think I am very cross this evening. Nothing more, my good Ninette. Now I am going down

to stay with uncle. When Monsieur Le Compte comes, let me know! Is Mr. Herbert home?"

"I think he is. He went into his room just before you came in, and I have not heard him come out yet," answered the maid.

Yes, Clarice was cross—not satisfied with herself. That day she had chilled and disappointed a warm, trusting heart, and conscience was busy torturing her. She descended the stairs, and knocked at the door of her uncle's "sanctum."

"Receiving no answer, she turned the knob and entered, and stood unperceived for a few moments.

Herman Waldrige sat gazing intently, spell-bound, on a miniature painting, which ever and anon he pressed to his heart. At length a deep groan burst forth, and then in a pleading voice, with raised eyes, he whispered:

"So young, so beautifully fair! Oh, Father of mercy, shield her child from such a fate!"

"Uncle!"

The soft sweet voice aroused him. Quickly concealing the miniature, he turned and asked:

"What is it, love? You are not off? It is very early."

"No, uncle, I am not going for an hour or two. I dressed early, so as to spend some time with you. I fancied you were not well, you looked so sad. Now, uncle, tell me how I look to-night. Ninette was quite enraged at my simple attire."

He drew her toward him, gazed long and sadly on her, then sank back in his chair, bowed his head on his clasped hands, and seemed struggling with a great sorrow.

"What is it, uncle? Have I grieved you? Has Herbert dared to complain to you?"

"No, no, Clarice, you do him injustice. It is nothing of the kind. I am glad you have come to me this evening. I

am very sad ; my mind has been with the past. Clarice, love, *this* is your mother's birthday. You are very like her, particularly to-night. She would never be decked in jewels ; always in flowers."

"Tell me of my mother, uncle ; you have promised so often. Do, please ; this is surely a suitable time, her birthday."

"Yes, love, I will tell you all to-night. But you must first tell me what is the trouble with Herbert. He seems very much depressed, and I have noticed an increasing coldness in your manner to each other. Is he to accompany you to-night? "

"Uncle, Herbert has seen proper to take me to task several times lately for receiving the attentions of gentlemen, particularly since my acquaintance with Monsieur Le Compte. To-day I was, perhaps, too hasty. I said some cruel things, and ended by telling him he had no right to dictate to me, and most likely he *never would* have. He is not going to-night, I think," answered Clarice.

"I had surmised as much ; I therefore had determined no longer to delay telling you the long-promised story.

"You have heard, my love, that you are mine only by adoption. Your mother was the child of my father's dearest friend.

"Edith Maynard was bequeathed by her dying father to his friend's love and care. Very dear was the little orphan to my father, sharing equally with my sister and me his love.

"Little Edith was three years old when I first saw her ; I was a wild, thoughtless boy of ten. My mother would say, 'Love the little one, Herman, and try to comfort and amuse her. She has no mother or father, and we must not let her feel her loss.'

"She was a shy, timid little thing. So fair and frail, with

large blue eyes, and a shower of golden ringlets, I thought her the most beautiful being I had ever seen. She was so different from my sister Isabel, a wild, fearless, brilliant little maid of five years."

"I think my care for the little Edith brought forth the first serious thoughts I ever had. My first and last thought of every day was how to please her. I could not bear to have any one take care of her, save myself. I taught her to read, draw, ride, and more than all, to love me. My father used often to say :

" 'How steady that wild boy has grown ! He has taken the charge of our little Edith, and really seems to be deeply impressed with the responsibility of his position.'

"My mother would answer by saying :

" 'How devoted he is to her, and how the little one loves him.'

"And they would smile approvingly.

"Yes, I thought I loved the little baby girl ; but I knew not what love was until in after years.

"I had to leave my darling for college life. I never faltered in my allegiance to my little one. This love of her kept me firm against temptation—free from vice. I felt I could not return and meet the gaze of her beautiful, loving eyes—not dare to touch her pure, sweet lips, if I was like too many of my associates.

"Every vacation, on my return home, the little one would meet me with a sister's caresses. When she was little more than thirteen, I left her, to travel. When parting, she clung wildly around me, crying, and begging father not to let me go—a perfect child still.

"I was gone two years. On my return, I could scarcely credit the change that short time had made.

"Oh, Clarice, you are beautiful, but your mother was more than that—she was like a beautiful dream ! I almost

feared to move or speak, dreading lest the bright vision should melt away. I dared not caress that lovely maiden, as I was wont to do my baby sister. At length I became accustomed to her great beauty; but there was never again the free happy hours, as in childhood days. *Then* came the time when I knew what it was to love. After a time we understood each other, and pledged our love. I will show you now her picture, painted for me on her seventeenth birthday. Here it is."

And he drew the miniature from his bosom, opened it gazed a moment, and then passed it to Clarice.

"Yes, yes; it is my own mamma, I know. These features call back the past. I can remember her, uncle—but not looking like this; but oh, so pale and sad. Mother! mother!" she sobbed, and pressing kiss after kiss upon the beautiful painting, she returned it, saying:

"Uncle, may I come and see this every day?"

"Yes, love."

"Now, uncle, tell me more. Quick, please; I am so anxious to know all!"

"Twenty years ago to-day that was painted. I think it was the happiest day of my life. For months after, I was in a delirium of joy.

"The next fall we all went to New Orleans, to spend a few weeks.

"The great beauty of Edith—and of my sister Isabel—drew around them many of the handsomest, talented, and eligible young men then in the city. Among them came Alphonse De Vere, a young Frenchman of noble birth, and of great fortune, rumor said. Very fine-looking and pleasant, I must admit he was; one most likely to please the fancy and dazzle the eye of one like Edith, so unsophisticated and child-like.

"I must hasten over this part of my trying task. After

an acquaintance of three weeks with this young man, came a blow that almost crushed the life from out me. Edith had gone—eloped with De Vere!

“How I lived I knew not. They placed in my hand a letter from her. She said she had mistaken the nature of her love for me until she met Alphonse; then she knew too well. Much more she wrote of her gratitude and sisterly love, and asked to have her wardrobe sent to the Hotel de——; that she should sail with her husband for Paris in a few days. She ended by saying it would be better for us not to meet just now; but when she returned, after a while, she hoped we would all welcome and forgive her, particularly for the unhappiness she had caused me.

“My heart withered as I read. It has never revived since. The world has never seemed the same.

“My father immediately enclosed her a draft for the amount, with interest, which was placed in his hands by her father, for her education and expenses—amounting to about twenty thousand dollars—never a dollar of which had my father used. He reared her as one of his own.

“One year after another passed, and we heard nothing from her.

“My health was very feeble. Isabel was going to Europe with her husband and little Herbert, and insisted that the change would be beneficial to me, and I must go. I agreed.

“Seven years had rolled round since Edith left us. We were then in Paris. I had been thinking much of the past, and was very sad that day. Isabel coaxed me out for a walk.

“We were loitering in the garden of the Tuileries. Herbert was playing around; when presently he came running to me, saying:

“‘Uncle, do see! Here is a little baby girl selling flowers.’

"He drew forward a wee little thing of about four years old.

"The child's face fascinated me. Where had I seen her before?

"'Isabel, look at this little one; where have we seen her before? Her face is very familiar, but I cannot place her.'

"I looked up at my sister, waiting for her reply, when I noticed her face pale and flush alternately. At length she whispered:

"'Herman, look again; this must be Edith's child. It is the great likeness to her you see, but it is the difference in the coloring—Edith's features and expression, Alphonse De Vere's color of hair and eyes—this difference is what bewilders you. Speak to her; ask her name, and where her mother is.'

"I saw then the truth of Isabel's words. The little girl surely was strangely like Edith, save the dark hair and eyes; only the difference in coloring, as she had said. We questioned her, and no doubt was in our minds that we had found our lost Edith.

"Following the little girl, she led us to a miserable tenement-house, up numberless long stairs, and stopping before a door said, with an important little air:

"'Madam, Monsieur, this is me lady mamma's room.'

"I motioned Isabel to enter, I could not speak. I dared not approach her until I had in a degree subdued my agitation.

"I cannot tell how long I waited, when Isabel came out, and said:

"'Come in; but for mercy's sake try to be calm. Any excitement may kill her immediately. She is very ill. Come, she has asked for you.'

"Calling on Heaven for strength and help, I entered, and beheld my Edith.

"A wan smile lighted her face for an instant. I took her hand, bent over and pressed my lips to her forehead, and whispered:

"‘My darling sister.’

"It flashed in my mind that nothing I could say to her would express so quickly and perfectly that I had forgiven her and induce her to think I had not suffered so very much, and in short, calm and reassure her, at *this* title from me.

"Scarcely a trace of her glorious beauty remained. The golden hair lay in tangled, clammy masses. The once laughing blue eyes were wildly bright just then, burning with fever and excitement. Her features and form were terribly attenuated. It was too truly plain the hand of death was upon her.

"Living in the most abject poverty; cared for only by a poor flower woman, whose heart was touched by the beauty and suffering of her neighbor, she gave up her employment to nurse the sick one; only sending out her bouquets by the little girl to sell. With the amount obtained so, and by the disposal of the few remaining articles of handsome clothing, Edith was provided with a few necessities to sustain life.

"We carried her with us to our hotel; surrounded her with every comfort and luxury; the best physicians were called; but nothing could stay the cruel hand that was drawing her away. A broken heart, privation and suffering had done a speedy work.

"She lingered with us scarcely two weeks; then passed away so quietly and sweetly, that I, clasping her hand, thought her sleeping.

"We learned from her that Alphonse was a mere adventurer. He had squandered his all and hers, and finally was killed in a gambling saloon. After that terrible event she

had done some little fancy work for her maintenance; but soon her health gave away, and in two months was unable to rise from her bed. Soon after her marriage she had found out her dreadful mistake, and was so bowed with mortification and horror that she could not write and let us know of her fate.

“Finally, she bequeathed her little daughter to my care and love. We laid her in a foreign land, raised a monument to mark her resting-place, and returned to our home, with the little one and the faithful flower woman, Ninette. I have been living my boyhood days over, watching Herbert’s devotion to my little Clarice. And now, my love, my lost Edith’s child will know how well I can sympathize with Herbert in his present sorrow.”

Clarice was weeping; she had been ever since her uncle placed her mother’s picture before her. She had drawn her cushioned seat near him, and sat clasping his hand.

Ninette came to the door, and broke the spell of sadness, by saying:

“Monsieur Le Compte is in the drawing-room, ma’am-selle.”

Clarice arose, quickly approached the door, hesitated, returned, and throwing her arms around her uncle’s neck, said:

“I know, my more than father, how severe a trial this has been to you. You have for me unveiled your wounded heart, and it has bled anew to-night. But I think you may rest easy. You have not suffered in vain.”

Going to the door, she said:

“Go, Ninette, and see if Mr. Herbert is in his room, and say I wish to see him a moment in the hall.”

Herbert came slowly down the stairs, a mingled look of sorrow and surprise on his fine countenance. He stood waiting her pleasure.

"Herbert, please go with me to the drawing-room, to excuse myself to Monsieur Le Compte. Uncle seems lonesome, and I will stay home with him to-night, if you will join us in his room," she said.

And holding out her hand, it was clasped by Herbert, and descending the stairs, they entered the drawing-room.

After greeting the young man, and politely bidding him be seated, Herbert withdrew to the far end of the room on some pretext, and Clarice said :

"Monsieur, you will have to excuse me this evening. Uncle is not well, and I have decided to remain with him."

"Of course the young man was dreadfully disappointed, and declared he would not go either.

"I must beg you *will* ; for many young ladies will miss you, and be sadly disappointed if you are not there. As for myself, staying home to-night is not only a duty, but a pleasure, to be able to cheer my uncle ; and if Herbert will exert himself to assist me, I think I shall have a very pleasant evening."

Little more was said. The young man took his departure. The kind, but decided manner of Clarice made him feel very certain the "good-bye" she bade him was not only for that night, but for ever !

"Clarice, what am I to understand by this ?" asked Herbert, as soon as the door closed, on the departure of their guest.

"That your Clarice is not *quite* as wicked as she tried to be to-day. I am tired of making so many people miserable. There are numberless girls sighing for young Le Compte's attentions, for which I do not care a straw. Let him return to them. If I encouraged him longer, possibly I might make him a little unhappy. You are not feeling very joyous just now, and to end the list, *I* am not very well content until I feel worthy of my dear noble Herbert."

Playfully putting his hand over her lips, he gently said :
“Hush! Be true to your own pure heart, love, and we shall be very happy.”

They went into Uncle Herman's room, and carried with them a great relief to his anxious heart.

Herbert never knew to what cause to attribute the great joy which broke in on his sadness, like a ray of sunshine through the darkest clouds, on that memorable night, and Uncle Herman kept his own counsel.

SAVED BY LOVE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

“Yes, Good, though only THOUGHT, has life and breath—
God’s life—and so can be redeemed from death;
And evil, in its nature, is decay,
And any hour can blot it all away.”

“WHAT a remarkable looking person that nurse of yours is, Nellie,” said Mrs. Markham to her friend, Nellie Livingston.

“Remarkable in what way? For her plain, almost ugly face, I suppose,” replied Mrs. Livingston.

“Yes—that is it; *almost* ugly, you say. Why, she is positively painfully bad looking; indeed, I do not think I could have such a—I must say hideous person about me,” exclaimed her friend.

“Why, you do not really mean so; look at her honest, clear eyes, her very pleasant mouth; we do not see her ugly looks; we see only the true, brave heart looking through her eyes, and know her patience and endurance. To us she is almost pretty, and the children love her (I sometimes think) better than me——”

“But that terribly ugly scar she has across her face. Did you know her before she received that wound?” questioned Mrs. Markham.

“That scar does not make her look any the worse to us. On the contrary, it endears her the more, for it was received in our service. Most likely but for that, my little ones might have been motherless.”

“How was it? Do tell me; you know this is my first
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visit to you, except for a few hours, since you were first married, so this is the first time I have seen this woman. What is her name?"

"Nora Parsons. She has been with us twelve years; indeed, I do not know what I should do without her. We do not look on her as a servant. She is as near to me as one of my sisters. I will tell you about her, and then you will know how she won my esteem and love:

"I was passing through the Protestant Asylum the first year of my marriage, for the purpose of obtaining one of the girls to send to my husband's mother, living out of town a few miles. I was much interested in the institution, and the matron, a very worthy lady, was very kind in showing me the different objects of interest. As we were passing through a room where the girls were all either sewing or knitting, she stopped before a girl about fourteen years old, and said:

"'You are very slow at your knitting, Nora. I told you that stocking must be finished this afternoon, and it does not look much like it now.'

"'Indeed, ma'am, I can scarcely see, my head aches so badly; that is the reason I've done so little,' replied the child.

"'An excuse for idleness, I think,' and passing on a few steps, she said to me, 'She comes of a very bad set. I fear I shall have much trouble with her. She is inclined to be stubborn, and rather hardened, I think.'

"'No,' I said, 'not hardened, I am sure. I noticed her under lip quiver when she spoke, and from that, I know she has a sensitive nature. I never knew it to fail. There is something good in her, you'll find out sometime. May I speak to her?' I said.

"Having obtained permission, I returned to the girl and, taking from my cubar an orange, I said:

“ ‘I am very sorry your head aches,’ and putting my hand on her head I found it very hot. ‘Yes, I know you are suffering; take this orange, won’t you? and I will ask Mrs. Bland to let you go out and sit in the cool.’

“She did not speak. I saw her heart was too full. I went and spoke to the matron. She returned with me, and said:

“ ‘Certainly, Nora; put up your work. I did not know your head was aching very much. Go out and sit in the garden, or lie down, either.’

“I gave her my little bottle of sal ammonia, and saying, ‘Be a good girl, dear,’ left the asylum.

“Eight years passed by, when one morning I was standing at the basement-window, holding up the two youngest children to hear an organ-grinder, when I noticed a girl looking at the window very intently, and then coming up to the door, she pulled the bell.

“In a few moments the servant opened the room door, and said:

“ ‘Some one to see you, Madam.’

“ ‘What is it?’

“ ‘Do you want to engage a nurse, or help of any kind?’ she said.

“ ‘No;’ I told her I had an excellent nurse just then, and three other servants I liked very well.

“ ‘I can sew nicely, and cut and fit. I wish you would take me. I want to live with you so much. Do please take me,’ she pleaded.

“I was surprised at her earnest manner, and said:

“ ‘Why do you wish to live with me so much? What do you know of me?’

“She put her hand in her pocket, and drawing out a little smelling-bottle, said:

“ ‘Don’t you remember this? I am the girl you gave it to, years ago in the Asylum.’

"I recognized my little bottle, and soon called to mind the girl I had given it to.

" 'You spoke kindly to me ; those gentle words were the first said to me since my mother's death. You said I was not hardened ; that there was good in me ; and you bade me "try to be good," and I did try to do right and please Mrs. Bland ; and every day I prayed to God to bless her whose gentle words had broken the spell of evil that was creeping over me ; and see, I gained a good name.'

" 'Where have you been staying since you left the Asylum ? How long have you been out of employment ?' I asked.

" 'I have been living with my brother, keeping house for him—but '—and she hesitated, then said :

" 'He is not a good man, and I cannot win him from his bad ways ; so I have left him. Oh ! please let me live with you, I do not care for wages, only let me stay and serve you,' and she caught my hand and held it clasped to her bosom.

"I did not know what to do ; I was considering it over, and had pretty much made up my mind to let her remain, when she began her pleading again.

" 'Take me, do ! just for one week, and then if I don't suit you, send me away.'

" 'You shall stay here for the present, and I will see what arrangement we can make for the future,' I said.

"If you could have seen the look of content and joy on her face then, you would not have thought her so ugly. When Albert came home, I told him all concerning Nora ; and after seeing her, he said :

" 'I like her looks, and I think she may be of much service to you during my absence.'

"Albert was to leave for Europe (on business for the firm) in the next steamer.

"The second day after Nora came, he started. After bidding us good bye, he turned to her and said :

" 'Nora, take good care of my little ones.'

" 'With God's help, I will, sir,' she replied earnestly.

"Then he smiled approvingly to me, and said :

" 'I am glad she is with you.'

"One thing about her I could not understand. I could not induce her to go out of the house. Three or four times during the few days I sent her on errands, and instead of going, she would go and do the cook's work, and send her out. At length I asked her the reason. She replied :

" 'I will tell you the truth. I do not wish my brother to know where I am ; so I thought it best to remain in for a little while.'

"She slept in the nursery, next to my room. The night Albert left, I could not help noticing her being very restless ; if I turned or moved, she would be in the room in a moment, and ask if I spoke. I do not think she touched her pillow that night.

"The next evening several friends came in and stayed quite late, and having lost much rest the night before, I felt very sleepy, and scarcely lay down before I was off to dream-land.

"How long I slept, I know not ; I awoke in a great fright, and opening my eyes, I beheld by the dim light the most villainous face I ever saw. It told plainly of robbery, and if necessary, murder. I opened my mouth to scream, but I was speechless.

" 'None of your screaming ; just be quiet and tell me where I can find your diamond jewelry and money ; your plate is too heavy, and we are in a hurry this time. Come, speak quick, if you don't want to take a pill from this pretty box,' and he presented a pistol close to my face.

"I tried my best to speak and tell him what he wanted

to know, any thing to get him away; but no sound could I utter; I was almost dying with terror, not for myself, but for my little ones: my baby beside me. I pointed and looked over towards my bureau, to tell him where my jewel box was, when I beheld another man searching my drawers; the wretch near me exclaimed again:

“‘Come, speak quick, or here goes,’ and he raised his pistols.

“Oh! the agony of those moments; years, in suffering to me. Then came the short quick report of a pistol, the gas was put out, and I heard a rush into the room.

“Then came the awful curses of the one standing over me, as he exclaimed:

“‘Discovered! make tracks, Bill!’

“‘I got the box, cut down the back steps,’ whispered the other.

“‘Cut down, and cut through, if needs,’ was the answer.

“Then again I heard a scuffle, heavy blows, and a voice exclaiming:

“‘You wild cat! if you don’t let go of me, I’ll cut you with my knife—although I don’t like to hurt a woman.’

“‘Drop it Bill! they are coming; I’m off.’

“What more passed, I cannot say. When I became conscious, Nora was bending over me bathing my face; she said:

“‘You are only frightened, thank heaven. Do not be worried, I have everything safe.’ I saw her face was tied up; I pointed to it.

“‘Only a scratch; be still, all is right now,’ she said.

“It was near day then. In a short time there came a ring at the hall door.

“Nora was nervous, and said:

“‘I had better look out of the window, had I not?’

“I assented, and in a few moments she said:

“‘It is a policeman ; he says there is a man with his leg broken, lying down at the basement door, and thinks probably it is some one either coming to, or going from here, has fallen on the ice. What shall I do ?’

“‘One of those dreadful men, probably,’ I said.

“‘I will go and look,’ and she left the room. In a moment or two, she returned.

“‘Poor girl, despair was marked on every feature.

“‘Nora, my child what is it ?’ I asked.

“‘Fate ! fate ! Why did they not kill me, better than this,’ she said.

“‘What is it ? Tell me, Nora. I will do anything for you. Speak, child, I owe you so much. What troubles you,’ I asked.

“‘Can you trust me so much as to let me tell the policeman to let that man remain here for a little while—till I tell you all ?’ she said.

“‘Yes ; go, and hurry back to me.’

“‘Soon she returned, and dropping on her knees by the side of the bed, she sobbed piteously.

“‘Nora, tell me all. Let me know the worst. Who is that man ?’

“‘My brother,’ she gasped forth.

“‘What terrible mystery is this ? Oh ! girl, can it be possible !’ a dreadful thought came into my mind. Was she an accomplice ?—‘that you came here to try—’

“‘To serve and save you,’ she meekly said.

“‘Speak, tell me all !’ I demanded.

“‘Lady, I told you I was living with my brother. I began to mistrust him, to think he was not living honorably, but I had no proof of it. One night I was sitting up, waiting for his return. I threw myself on a lounge in the little sitting-room. I heard him coming in the door with

some one with him. I do not know what possessed me to make believe I was asleep.

“ ‘I heard them whisper a plan of robbery. They had found out that the gentleman was going to leave town, and that there were diamonds and much of value in the house. My brother was a new hand, and not so bad as the other; he objected at first, but finally agreed. Then I heard the name Livingston. I remembered the name; it was marked on the little bottle. It was your name; the name of her who had lifted me from the dark, hardened existence I was sinking into, who had with one sweet smile and gentle words opened the closed heart, and let in the soft, warm light, and finally made me a true woman. I listened on, and heard the street and number.

“ ‘First I thought I would plead with my brother, but I knew that would not do with the other; then I determined to quarrel with him, on some pretext, and leave to seek my own living. I thought if I went off without some cause he would suspect I had heard them. This I did, and now you know all,—why I pleaded with you to take me. I had hoped to hear them before they got in, and frighten them off. Night before last was to be the night. You know I was awake all night, and so I could not keep awake the second night, although I tried so hard. I did not know I had been asleep until I heard the voices in your room; then I did the best I could. This is all I have to tell, except I had hoped my brother would escape and not be found out by you. Oh, mother! mother! look down from Heaven and pity me. I tried my best to save your boy, but it is all over now,’ she wept forth.

“ I was deeply affected by this profound gratitude. And for what? A few words; for this she had risked her life. I must not be less noble than this poor girl. I had been taught what gratitude was, and must profit by the lesson, I thought.

"I hastily arose, wrapped myself in my robe de chambre, and asked Nora :

" 'Has your brother seen you, does he know you are here? ' "

" 'No, I looked through the blinds and saw him,' she said.

" 'Well then, perhaps he had better not know you are here, for the present, it might enrage him, and now, poor girl, rest easy, worry no more; put your trust in God, and ask his blessing on my efforts for you and your brother's welfare. I am going to have him brought in and cared for. Do not fear exposure.' "

"I went down. The policeman was still below talking with the carriage driver. Fortunately the attempted robbery was not known by any but the cook, Mrs. Brown, who was awakened by the report of the pistol used by Nora. She was a very discreet woman, and I gave her to understand I did not wish her to mention a word of the affair. I knew I could trust her. She had been long in mother's family before she came with us.

"I directed the men to bring the boy in—he was only about twenty. We soon made him as comfortable as possible on the lounge in the sitting-room, and then I said to the policeman :

" 'Will you be kind enough to stop on your way and ask my physician, Dr. Arthur, to come here as soon as possible? This boy will remain here for the present. He was leaving here last night, and probably slipped on the ice. He is known to me, so we will relieve you of any further trouble.' "

"I wish you could have seen the look of mingled amazement, doubt and anxiety; but not a word had he uttered all the time.

"I dismissed the driver, and then looked at the boy, and said :

“‘I know you and your purpose, last night, of course. You are not so badly hurt that you cannot speak, although you are suffering terribly. And we cannot tell what may be the extent of your injury. Your sin has met with a speedy punishment.’

“‘What are you going to do with me? get the doctor to patch me up, so as to be able to move me to the State’s prison?’ he doggedly asked.

“‘No; nothing of the sort. I shall get the doctor to do everything he can for you to enable you to go your way wherever you choose; and I shall, in the mean time, do all I can to make you comfortable. I have no ill-will against you, believe me, and be sure you have nothing to fear from me. It has pleased Heaven to thwart your designs, and perhaps God has thrown you on my mercy for your salvation’s sake.’

“Just then Mrs. Brown came in with a cup of coffee. We raised him and gave it to him. Even then—so soon—I saw this strange treatment to him was making its impress. His face was losing its hardened expression, and, in place, came one of patient suffering.

“Doctor Arthur came, pronounced it a compound fracture of the knee. After sending for his assistant, and working over him for some time, they gave him an opiate, and left.

“I returned to Nora, telling her what I had done, and should continue until he was better.

“I cannot describe her gratitude, for it was more of looks and actions than words.

“I learned from her something of their past life.

“Her father had been a very hard, harsh, but honest man; the mother, a poor delicate creature, endeavoring in every way to soothe the harsh man and shield the children from his constant reproofs and punishments. William, her

brother, was a really wild boy, loving play better than work or books, and this brought on him his father's anger constantly. The mother would conceal his faults. This management, of course, was the boy's ruin. The father's cruelty, the mother's blind indulgence, paved the way for his future, evil life. Nora was three years older, and, when dying, the mother besought her to take care of, watch, and save her darling boy.

"Her father placed her in the asylum, and bound the boy to a trade, from which he soon ran away.

"In two years after the mother's death, the father died; and the boy, then free from all restraint, followed the example and advice of his bad associates.

"It was evident that this boy's bad character was the result of wrong management at home, and I felt hopes of an entire different course of treatment having a happy result.

"He had a tedious time of it, and much suffering. I would often see his eyes fill, and the same tremulousness of the lip, that Nora has. Two weeks passed, and one day I asked him if he had any relations?

"He told me of his parents being dead, and spoke very kindly of his sister, and ended by saying:

"'If I had only taken her advice, I would not have been here.' After a few moments he said:

"'He often heard mother say: "God's will be done;" and "everything happens for the best;" and I know it is so now myself. Mrs. Livingston, I do not know how to talk to God—will you ask Him to help me to lead a different life?'

"'I have been, my boy, praying for you, and so has some one else. I will bring you one who has been the means of redeeming you, by her efforts, and God's blessing,' I replied.

"I soon sent Nora in. I did not witness their interview. In about an hour she came up to the nursery, and clasping one after another of the children to her bosom, said:

“ ‘Oh God will reward you in these little ones.’

“She told me he knew all. How grieved he was at her face being so hurt. She would never admit her brother’s doing it, but I think he must have, to make her let go of him. The more I saw of William, the more thankful I was of having saved him; I felt sure he would continue in his determination of endeavoring to be a good man.

“Albert returned home in two months. William was just getting about on his crutch. I told him I had Nora’s brother, and what I had done for him. I thought I would not tell him the way he received the accident just then, until, he had a chance of knowing him. I was fearful of the first impression.

“Albert has always thought, or is polite enough to say so, ‘that every thing his wife does, was all right.’

“After my telling him about William, he said:

“ ‘And this is the way you have been amusing yourself, doing good. But this has been rather an expensive amusement, has it not?’

“ ‘Yes, rather,’ I replied, ‘but it has been a great pleasure, and what is yours?’

“ ‘To please you,’ he gallantly said.

“ ‘Well go on, Nellie darling, we have enough and some to spare.’

“I think about ten days after Albert’s return, I went into the room, and found him and William talking very earnestly, the latter very much affected.

“ ‘Nellie, this boy has told me all concerning himself,’ Albert said.

“ ‘Oh! do forgive my concealing it from you; I intended to tell you all after you knew him,’ I exclaimed.

“ ‘As usual, you are all right,’ he smilingly said.

“ ‘But Nellie, I think it was rather risky. I believe, however, you have received your reward.’

“‘Yes, sir, it was risky, few would have done it,’ William said. ‘Oh, I wish to the good Lord there were more like her.’

“Oh, sir! if your missionaries would, instead of tracts, and sermons, drop a few kind, gentle words—if parents, teachers, employers and *all* having authority and influence, would give a kind smile, a gentle word to the erring, there would be less need of so many state prisons and houses of correction, less numbers of poor miserable beings perishing daily for want of a hand to lift them up from perdition. It costs so little. The value it may prove Eternity shall tell.”

“Now, my dear Mrs. Markham, I’ve told you why we love Nora.”

“But her brother, where is he, what became of him?” asked her friend.

“Ask Albert, here he is! Tell Mrs. Markham what William Parsons is doing.”

“My bookkeeper for five years past, and a noble fellow he is,” said Albert, warmly.

“Well,” said her friend, “this is wonderful. Truth is stronger than fiction: and all this was done by gentle words.”

THE BRIDE'S SECRET.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

And now they are standing face to face—
Hath a dream come over that peaceful place?
One of those visions ghastly and drear,
That makes her shrink with a livid fear?
She raised her hand to her wildered brow,
" 'Tis a strange delusion," she murmured low,
" 'Tis but a dream," and she strove to speak,
But her heart was frozen—her voice was weak.—C. A. WARFIELD.

WE were very lonely, mother and I, in the great old house where we had lived all my life. But home was now no longer home, since brother Willie left us. He had accepted the charge of a church in a far-distant State, and oh! how we missed his pleasant voice and bright, smiling face!

Mother's health had failed very much since her boy left her; I think she was grieving after him. With loss of health and strength came loss of courage. She grew very timid, and declared that it was quite dangerous for us to be alone in the house, with no protector save our old cook, Mammy Kate, and the big old dog Fido. I felt quite safe with these two to care for us. But mother insisted that she must either break up housekeeping and go to boarding, or get some gentleman to make his home with us.

She spoke of this to our minister, and he suggested that we should take a young friend of his, who was then looking for a private house to make his home in. This young man was a perfect gentleman, and would be quite an acquisition to any family, he said. And so it was that Howard Lin-

dell came among us. I was twenty-three years old then, and had never loved any man save father and Willie. Since father's death, Willie was all the world to me. No one had ever tried to make me love them, or I should, likely enough, long before that.

I had no pretension to beauty, you might well know, or some one would have wooed me before I arrived at that age. Yet I was not positively ugly. My friends said I had a bright, pleasant face, a cheerful disposition; that was all.

I had never cared for my looks at all up to that time. But when our boarder had been with us a few weeks, I began to consult my mirror very often. I really wished very much to look well. I found out just the colors that suited me best, and wore no other. Yes, I coveted beauty then. When Howard Lindell first came to us, I thought him a man of middle age, but I heard him tell mother he was "just thirty." He was so quiet and sad, he looked at least ten years older. I felt sure his life had been clouded by some great sorrow.

I think what first made me like him was his attentiveness to mother. He was so thoughtful and gentle.

He left us for a few weeks on a trip North. Then it was I found out how dear he was to me. I scolded myself well for it. I said:

"Nell Grainger, you have not been prudent or wise. You have not been as careful and sensible as usual. You have let your heart slip away from you without any sort of assurance you will have one in return."

But it was no use then to scold or talk. Too late. I was really in love!

Howard came back; and the unmistakable pleasure he showed on meeting me, made me feel that I had a strong hold on his heart, if it was not then entirely mine.

That evening we were out on the portico. It was rather cool. Howard went quickly in the house, and bringing out a shawl, wrapped it about me, saying :

"I must take care of you. What should I do without you? I cannot afford to have you sick; these long evenings would be so lonely without your 'bright face near me!'"

Months wore on. I felt quite sure Howard loved me; yet he never told me so in words.

He had been with us over a year, when we received a letter from Willie. He had married a few months after he left us; and now he was coming home, that we might know and love his wife, he said.

"Camille is far more beautiful than most women. Yet it was not that—it was her beauty of heart that won my love, and will, I am sure, yours."

As I read aloud that extract from my brother's letter, Howard exclaimed, in a voice of much agitation :

"Camille? how strange! I knew a Camille once, and she was very beautiful, but of course she cannot be the same. What was her maiden name?"

"Mason," I replied.

He looked relieved, but his face was very sad, and remained so all the evening.

The day for their coming arrived. We were watching for them—Howard and I on the portico, mother at the parlor window.

"You will have neither eye nor ear for me, Nellie, when your brother comes." And he took my hand. I have often thought he was about to tell me then what I had yearned so long to hear—when a carriage drove rapidly up, and I was caught in my brother's arms!

"Welcome your sister, Nellie," he said, and hastened in to meet mother.

I turned to my brother's wife. She was gazing wildly at Howard.

"Camille! Great Heaven!" I heard him murmur.

She was deathly pale, and seemed almost fainting.

Putting out her arms to me, she said, pitifully:

"Oh, I am so tired! Please take me in!"

Beautiful she truly was, yet I could not love her—nay, nor pity her, although just then she seemed to need it so much.

My brother had neither seen nor heard what had just transpired. He was clasped in his mother's arms, receiving her joyful greeting.

My mind was filled with dark forebodings. This woman I felt sure was in some way connected with Howard's past—his sorrow. But how?

I went with her in, and after she had been welcomed by mother, she again complained of great fatigue. Willie said she must go and lie down and rest before tea, and carried her up to his old room, which Mammy Kate and I had been busy for a day or two making pretty and cosy.

I had not seen Howard since I heard his exclamation when he first saw my brother's wife, but I knew he was up in his room. I heard him pacing the floor continually while I was attending to the arrangement of the tea-table. His room was just over the one we ate in. All was ready, and Kate rang the bell. I wondered if we should see him again during the evening. Most likely not, I concluded; when the door opened, and Howard was beside me.

He was very pale. The old look of sorrow, which had worn off so much within the last few months, was back again. Yes, and deepened, I thought. He came close to me, took my hand, and said:

"This may be the only chance I shall have for a few words with you before I leave. I am unexpectedly forced

to go away for a few weeks. I will write you, (with your permission), while I am absent."

Steps were descending the stairs.

I nodded assent, and with a hasty "God bless you, dear Nellie," he moved towards the window.

Mother, Camille, and Willie came in, and then mother formally introduced our boarder. Willie cordially shook Howard's hand, Camille merely bowed. A less observant witness would have supposed they had never met before. How jealously I watched every expression on the face of both of those two, so mysteriously connected in the past.

We were through with our tea, and arose to go in the parlor. Willie offered his arm to mother, and smilingly said :

"Camille, I resign *you* to Mr. Lindell."

Any other than one as bitter as I was towards that poor miserable looking young creature, would have truly pitied her then. She cast the most beseeching look towards Howard. He approached, and offered his arm. Scarcely touching it, she walked by his side, I followed a little way behind, but near enough to catch the hurried words of Camille :

"For Heaven's sake, control yourself, and *don't tell them !* "

"Fear not from me," Howard replied quickly, and handed her in the parlor.

Then how I almost hated her ! Howard remained in only a short time : and then excusing himself, on the plea of making ready for an early start in the morning, he bade us good night.

I could plainly see the relieved expression pass over Camille's face, when she understood that Howard was to leave us. That night I scarcely slept an hour. My brain was filled with my discovery of the former acquaintance

between Howard and Camille. Oh! how were they connected?

When I arose in the morning he was gone. Camille came down to breakfast looking very much happier than the evening previous. Oh, she was beautiful! and immediately won the heart of mother and old Kate. Yes, and Fido too; he followed her about, and showed his devotion in every way that a dog could. Yes, all loved her save I. And Howard; oh, what were his feelings towards her? I could not divine. After breakfast I went into his room; I always took care of it.

Many pieces of paper were lying over the floor; among them were very small pieces of manuscript, and in a woman's handwriting.

I stooped and picked up a few scraps; on one was *mille*, another *Ca*. Ah, 'twas plainly her writing. I was wild, jealous, scarcely capable of judging right from wrong, or I would not have done as I did. Carefully collecting the tiny bits, I very easily fixed them all together. They were only written on one side. There it lay before me—possibly the secret! But no, I was not to know then. The little note did not divulge what I was almost crazy to know. It ran thus:

“My husband knows nothing of my past. He met me as Camille Mason, a poor governess; loved me, and asked me to be his. I was dying for some loving, protecting arm to shelter me from the hard, cruel world. I dared not reveal the truth. I feared he would fly from me. I have been so happy the past few months, until seeing you brought back the terrible past. Oh, Howard, as you hope for mercy from Heaven, show it to me. To lose my husband's love would kill me; keep my secret CAMILLE.”

I hardly remember anything that happened after reading

the note. I was not feeling well, I know. From Mammy Kate I gathered what transpired the next three weeks.

She says I seemed quite sick and feverish the night after Howard went away, and the next day was unable to get up. That Willie insisted on mother sending for our doctor, saying he did not like my symptoms. I grew rapidly worse, and the doctor shook his head. That I was fearfully ill, all felt too well. Kate and Camille would alternate sitting up with me; and one night, when Camille was beside me, I was raving in fever, talking wildly. Kate thought Camille became alarmed, and awoke her, saying:

"Get up, mammy, I can stay here no longer. Her words are killing me. Oh, try and stop her talking! Do not let any one else hear her."

I was talking about Howard and Camille; but what, Kate could not understand.

Camille took care of me no more after that night. A premature illness seized her. A little bud bloomed on earth only to fade and pass away. The young mother was childless. For many days she laid ill, just hovering between life and death. But we both lived on, contrary to all expectations. Camille, in her fever had talked as wildly as I. My brother learned there was some secret that his wife was so anxious to conceal from him, and that Howard Lindell was in some way connected with it. But even in her wildest delirium she did not divulge the nature of it.

I was gaining strength fast, and could get out on the porch on which my room opened, when one day Willie came in. His usually handsome, cheerful face was worn and haggard from long attention by the sick-bed, and principally, I think, from the doubts clouding his mind. I could not help exclaiming:

"Willie, are you too going to be ill? You look so sick!"

"No, dear, it is only anxiety. Now that Camille and you are both getting well, I shall get rested, and God grant, *relieved* too. Camille is quite strong to-day, and has sent me here to bring you to her. She wants to see you so much."

I would have refused; but for fear of distressing Willie, allowed him to help me in.

Poor thing! She looked so pale, so sad. For a moment only, my heart softened as I gazed on her. I approached and kissed her for the first time.

"Thank you, dear Nellie, I feared you hated me," she said.

Those words reminded me of what she had caused me to suffer, and my heart grew hard again.

"Sit down, dear," she said. "I have sent for you to hear what I am going to tell my husband. The secret I have so carefully tried to hide from him has made you suffer, and it is only due that you should hear the whole history of my past.

"Howard Lindell and I were raised near together, seeing each other daily. His father and mine were intimate friends—partners in the same large mercantile firm. Howard was a few years older than I. We were both the only children of our parents, so it entered their minds that we were born for one another, and they determined to unite us when we were of suitable age. We loved each other only, I think, because we had no chance of loving any one else.

"The day of our marriage was fixed, and very near. I felt sure that my father had been for some years living in a style beyond his means. I knew he was in very comfortable circumstances, but his expenditures were fearful. The day before the one appointed for the wedding, old Mr. Lindell ventured an expostulation with my father. Then

there ensued a fierce quarrel; harsh, threatening words followed; but after a while they both became calmer, and parted, seemingly good friends again. The next day they met pleasantly, as usual.

"We were to be married in the evening. We were all dressed, and had proceeded to the drawing-room. The minister arose and approached us, when some one whispered:

" 'Wait: Mr. Lindell has not come!'

"My attendant and I entered the library adjoining, to wait.

"Howard seemed surprised, and said 'that his father was quite ready,' and drawing on his gloves when he left. Several minutes passed, and still he came not. Howard left me to send some one over to his home, to find out what detained him. *My* father was in the parlor with his guests.

"Many more minutes passed and they came not, neither Howard nor his father. A little while longer, and I heard a hurried movement in the parlors—many rushing out—and then the terrible words:

" 'Yes, murdered.' "

And here poor Camille seemed almost exhausted. It was a terrible trial for her to go back to that dreadful day. I felt for her truly then. Brother begged her to stop; not tell any more; to wait until she was stronger.

"No, no," she answered; "I have suffered too much, and caused others to suffer so severely by my silence; I must finish.

"I heard those terrible words, and then Howard rushed madly in, exclaiming:

" 'My dear good father is dead! dead!'

"I fainted. Of course the marriage was postponed.

"The next day I learned that Mr. Lindell had been found murdered in his library, and robbed of a very large amount

he had drawn from the bank that day. Many knew of the quarrel between my father and the murdered man. Suspicion pointed toward my dear parent. I must hurry over this. Oh, agony! The next day he was taken from me. In a few weeks more, tried, found guilty, and condemned to die. A great effort was made by the first men of the city, headed by Howard, for the commutation, at least, of the punishment; the fact of all the evidence being entirely circumstantial, being a strong feature in his favor. The sentence was changed to imprisonment for life. I only saw Howard once after that, until the day I came here. We both felt too well that a union between us was impossible. He assisted my father's lawyer to settle up our business, and placing in my hand a few hundred dollars, our all, he bade me farewell. I was to go to a brother of my father's to find a home. Leaving most of the money with my father to purchase some comforts beyond the prison fare, I went to my uncle's. But they were not kind. I was daily made to feel my position. I endured this as long as possible, and then I left for a home among strangers in a distant State. I answered an advertisement for a governess; and as my uncle was quite willing to be relieved of a constant reminder of the disgrace brought on him, he readily enabled me to secure the position.

“He suggested my adopting my mother's maiden name. I gladly seized the idea. And so he gave me a letter of recommendation, as having been a resident of his family for over a year, and he took pleasure in aiding me to attain a position I was so worthy to fill. He was a man widely known, and of considerable influence. I was accepted, and entered my position. In this family I remained but a short time—a few months. They were coarse, uneducated persons; and added to this, I had the misfortune to please the

eye of the son, a young man of considerable more refinement than his parents. He was very urgent in his attentions, and my only chance of relief was in going away. Again my uncle's letter found me a home, the location being quite unknown either to him or my late employers. Here it was I met my husband. Yes, Willie, when I found the chance of securing love, safety, protection, I dared not reveal the truth. Who and what was I? what the world called me: a murderer's daughter! although *I* never believed my father guilty. Yes, you married me under a false name. I feared you would fly from me—that you would not link your fair, pure name with such as mine. *Now* you know all.

And Camille ceased. I went and knelt beside her, waiting for Willie to give me a chance to give her my love and sympathy; both were hers then.

Willie still held her clasped in his arms, and saying:

"Oh, you did not know my heart. I would have loved you more if possible, for your sorrow. I would have taken you before the whole world! Why did you not trust me? But even yet I know not what was your name."

"Camille Osborn," she whispered.

"Osborn! Camille, speak again! Great Heaven! Can it be! Your father's name? Speak quick, child."

"Oliver Osborn," she whispered.

"Oh! Camille why did you not have confidence in your husband. Do you remember, a few weeks before our leaving home, my being sent for to attend a dying man? And when I returned home, and commenced telling you I had heard a murderer's dying confession, you grew terrified, and would not let me go on?"

"Yes, yes," she whispered.

"That man was Mr. Lindell's murderer. He confessed having seen Mr. Lindell draw the money from the bank, and

it was to secure it that he had murdererd him. I immediately drew up in writing his statement, had it signed and witnessed, and sent to the Governor of the State. Long before this your father is free, and probably hunting you. I must write to your uncle and father immediately."

"Thank God," she whispered, but was too feeble to say more.

On returning to my room, I went to my desk to get a paper for Willie to write. There I found a letter from Howard. In that he told me he loved me. He should return in a few weeks, but I must answer his letter directly, and give him a few words of hope. Two weeks had passed since it came. During my illness it had been forgotten.

While I was joyfully reading it over and over again, Kate came up, saying:

"Massa Howard Lindell down stairs; wants to see you quick."

I hurried down as fast as my feeble strength permitted, to see him. He looked at me a moment, and then caught me in his arms.

"Kate has told me how ill you have been. I was very near losing you. I shall take you under my own care very soon. Shall I not? You got my letter?" he said.

"Only just now."

"And your answer!"

I did not speak. My hand was still in his. He seemed perfectly satisfied.

"Where is Camille and your brother? I have her father out on the porch. You shall hear all very soon, darling. You will not be jealous?"

"No, no; not now. I *do* know all. We all have heard. I must hasten and give her the blessed news."

Father and daughter were soon clasped in each other's arms.

Poor Camille felt how much suffering her want of confidence in her husband had caused us all, and *she* had received a hard lesson from it.

We have been married many years. I never have been troubled with illness caused by jealousy since ; my brother's wife and I being converts and firm believers in *second* love, knowing full well that it brings pure and lasting happiness *if* accompanied by full faith and perfect confidence.

AUNT HENRIETTA'S MISTAKE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

“ Before thy soul, at this deep lottery,
Draw forth her prize ordained by destiny,
Know that there's no recanting a first choice;
Choose then discreetly.”

“ HEIGH-HO! This is Valentine's day. Oh, how I would like to get a Valentine! Did you ever get one, aunty?” said little Etta Mayfield.

“ Yes, many of them. But not when I was a child. In my day, children *were* children. You get a Valentine! I'm e'en a'most struck dumb with astonishment to hear you think of such things. Go, get your doll-baby, or your sampler, and look on that. Saints of Mercy! It seems only yesterday you were a baby in long clothes,” answered Miss Henrietta Mayfield, a spinster of uncertain age; but the folks in the village, who always knew everything, declared she had not owned to a day over thirty-five for the last ten years. This, if true, was quite excusable, for Miss Henrietta's little toilette glass reflected a bright, pleasant, and remarkably youthful face.

“ I'm almost seventeen, aunty, and I'm tired of being treated like a child,” said Etta, with a pout of her rosy lips.

“ Ten years to come will be plenty time enough for you to think of such things. A Valentine, indeed! I'd like to know who is to send one to you, or to any one else. There are only three unmarried men in our village; which of them would you like for your Valentine: Jake Spikes the

blind fiddler, Bill Bowen the deaf mail-boy, or Squire Sloughman? If the Squire sends a Valentine, I rather guess it will be to *me*. Oh, I forgot! There's the handsome stranger that boarded last summer with Miss Plimpkins. I noticed him at church, Sunday. Come down to make a little visit, and bring Miss Plimpkins a nice present ag'in, I guess. He is mighty grateful to her for taking such good care of him while he was sick. A uncommon handsome man. But taint a bit likely he'll think of a baby like you. He is a man old enough to know better—near forty, likely. He was monstrous polite to *me*; always finding the hymns, and passing his book to me. And I noticed Sunday he looked amazing pleasing at me. Land! it's ten o'clock. You'd better run over to the office and get the paper. No, I'll go myself. I want to stop in the store, to get some yarn and a little tea."

Miss Henrietta hurried off, and little Etta pouted on and murmured something about:

"People must have been dreadful slow and dull in aunty's young days," and then her thoughts wandered to that same handsome stranger.

She too had seen him in church on Sunday, and knew well how the rosy blush mantled her fair face when she saw the pleasant smile she had hoped was for her. But she might have known better, she thought; such a splendid man would never think of her. She would be sure to die an old maid, all on account of that dark-eyed stranger.

"Has Bill got in with the mail?" asked Miss Mayfield.

"Yes, Miss; here's your paper what Bill brought, and here is a letter or Valentine what Bill didn't bring. It's from the village," said the little old postmaster, with a merry laugh.

Yes, no mistaking, it was a Valentine, directed in a fine manly hand to Miss Henrietta Mayfield. "From Squire

Sloughman," thought Miss Henrietta. "He has spoken, or rather written his hopes at last." But no, that was not his handwriting.

Miss Mayfield stepped out on the porch, carefully opened the envelope, and glanced hurriedly over the contents, and then at the signature—Arthur Linton.

"Well, well, who would have thought?" said she; "that is the name of the handsome stranger! Just to think of his really taking a liking to me. Stop! may be he is a sharper from town, who has heard of my having a little property, and that's what he's after. I'll read his Valentine over again:

"Do not think me presumptuous, dear maid, in having dared to write you. No longer can I resist the continued pleadings of my heart. I have loved you ever since your sweet blue eyes, beaming with their pure loving light, met my gaze. I have seized the opportunity offered by St. Valentine's day to speak and learn my fate. I will call this evening and hear from your dear lips, if I shall be permitted to try and teach your heart to love,

"ARTHUR LINTON."

"Well, truly *that* is beautiful language. It is a long day since any body talked of my blue eyes. They were blue *once*, and I suppose are so still. Well, he writes as if he meant it. I'll see him, and give him a little bit of encouragement. Perhaps that seeing some one else after me will make the Squire speak out. For six years he has been following me. For what? He has never said. I like Squire Sloughman—(his name should be *Slowman*.) I'll try and hasten him on with all the heart I've got left. The most of it went to the bottom of the cruel ocean with my poor sailor-boy. Ah! if it had not been for his sad end, I would not now be caring for any man, save my poor Willie.

But it is a lonesome life I am living—and it's kind of natural for a woman to think kindly of some man; and the Squire is a real good fellow, and, to save me, I can't help wishing he would speak, and be done with it.

"This Valentine may be for my good luck, after all." Miss Henrietta's thoughts were swift now, planning for the future; her feet kept pace with them, and before she knew it, she was at her own door."

"Why, aunty, how handsome you do look! your cheeks are as rosy as our apples," said Etta.

"Is that such a rarity, you should make so much of it?" answered Miss Henrietta.

"No, indeed, aunty. I only hope I may ever be as good-looking as you are always.—Did you get your yarn and tea?"

"Land! if I hain't forget them! You see, child, the wind is blowing rather fresh, and I was anxious to get back," she answered her niece; but said to herself, "Henrietta Mayfield, I am ashamed on you to let any man drive your senses away."

"Never mind, Ettie; you can go over and spend the afternoon with Jessie Jones, and then get the things for me," she continued, glad of an excuse to get Etta away.

Miss Henrietta was very particular with her toilet that afternoon, and truly the result was encouraging. She was satisfied that she *was* handsome still.

It was near dark when she saw the handsome stranger coming up the garden walk.

"Did Miss Henrietta Mayfield receive a letter from me to-day?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; walk in," answered Miss Henrietta, who, although quite flurried, managed to appear quite cool.

"This perhaps may seem very precipitate in me, and I have feared perhaps you might not look with any favor on

my suit. Do, dear lady, ease my fears. Can I hope that in time I may win the heart I am so anxious to secure?"

"Ahem—well, I cannot tell, sure. You know, sir, we have to *know* a person before we can love him. But I must confess I do feel very favorably inclined towards you."

"Bless you, my dear friend; I may call you so now, until I claim a nearer, dearer title. If you are now kindly disposed, I feel sure of ultimate success. I feared the difference in our ages might be an objection."

"No, no; I do not see why it need. It is well to have a *little* advantage on one side or the other. But, my dear friend, should you fail to secure the affection, you will not think unkindly of your friend."

"No; only let me have a few weeks, with your continued favor, and I ask no more. Many, many thanks," and seizing her hand, he pressed it to his lips.

"Will you not now allow me to see my fair Henrietta?" he asked.

"Oh, I have been a little flurried, and did forget it was quite dark. I'll light the lamp in a minute."

Etta's sweet voice was now heard humming a song in the next room. She had returned from her visit, and as Miss Henrietta succeeded in lighting the lamp, her bright face peeped in the door, and she said:

"Aunty, Squire Sloughman is coming up the walk."

"Bless her sweet face! There is my Henrietta now!" exclaimed the visitor, and before the shade was adjusted on the lamp, she was alone. The handsome stranger was in the next room with—Etta!

A little scream, an exclamation of surprise from Etta, followed by the deep manly voice of Mr. Linton, saying:

"Dearest Henrietta, I have your aunt's permission to win you, if I can."

"Henrietta! Little baby Etta! Sure enough that was

her name too. What an idiot she had been!" thought Henrietta the elder. "Oh! she hoped she had not exposed her mistake! Maybe he had not understood her!"

But Squire Sloughman was waiting for some one to admit him, and she had no more time to think over the recent conversation, or to determine whether or not Mr. Linton was aware of her blunder.

Squire Sloughman was cordially welcomed, and after being seated a while, observed:

"You have got a visitor, I see," pointing to the stranger's hat lying on the table beside him.

"Yes, Etta's got company. The stranger that boarded at Miss Plimpkins' last summer. He sent Etta a Valentine, and has now come himself," returned Miss Henrietta.

"A Valentine! what for?"

"To ask her to have him, surely. And I suppose he'll be taking her off to town to live, pretty soon."

"And you, what will you do? It will be awful lonely here for you," said the Squire.

"Oh! he's coming out now," thought Miss Henrietta. And she gave him a better chance by her reply:

"Well, I don't know that anybody cares for that. I guess no one will run away with me."

But she was disappointed; it came not, what she hoped for, just then. Yet the Squire seemed very uneasy. At length he said:

"I got a Valentine myself, to-day."

"You! What sort of a one? Comic, funny, or real in earnest?" asked Miss Henrietta.

"Oh! there is nothing funny about it—not a bit of laugh; all cry."

"Land! a crying Valentine!"

"Yes, a baby."

"Squire Sloughman!" said Miss Henrietta, with severe dignity.

"Yes, my dear Miss Henrietta; I'll tell you all about it. You remember my niece, who treated me so shamefully by running away and marrying. Well, poor girl, she died a few days ago, and left her baby for me, begging I would do for her little girl as kindly as I did by its mother."

"Shall you keep it?" asked Miss Henrietta.

"I can't tell; that will depend on some one else. I may have to send it off to the poor-house!"

"I'll take it myself first," said his listener.

"Not so, my dear, without you take me too. Hey, what say you, now? I tell you, I've a notion to be kind and good to this little one; but a man must have some one to help him do right. Now it depends on you to help me be a better or a worse man. I've been thinking of you for a half-dozen years past, but I thought your whole heart was in little Etta, and maybe you wouldn't take me, and I did not like to deal with uncertainties. Now Etta's provided for with a Valentine, I'm here offering myself and *my* Valentine to you. Say Yes, or No; I'm in a hurry now."

"Pity but you had been so years ago," thought Miss Henrietta; but she said:

"Squire Sloughman, I think it the duty of every Christian to do all the good she can. So, for that cause, and charity towards the helpless little infant, I consent to—become—"

"Mrs. Sloughwoman—man I mean," said the delighted Squire, springing up and imprinting a kiss on Miss Henrietta's lips.

"Sloughwoman indeed! I'll not be *slow* in letting you know I think you are very hasty in your demonstrations. *Wait* until I give you leave," said the happy spinster.

"I have waited long enough. And now, my dear, do you hurry on to do your Christian duty; remembering particularly the helpless little infant needing your care," said the Squire, a little mischievously.

Miss Henrietta never knew whether her mistake had been discovered. She did not try to find out.

In a short time there was a double wedding in the village. The brides, Aunt Henrietta and little Etta, equally sharing the admiration of the guests.

Mrs. Sloughman admitted to herself, after all, it was the Valentine that brought the Squire out. And she is often heard to say that she had fully proved the truth of the old saying, "It's an ill wind that blows nobody good."

FALSE AND TRUE LOVE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

“Though round her playful lips should glitter
Heat lightnings of a girlish scorn,
Harmless they are, for nothing bitter
In that dear heart was ever born;
That merry heart that cannot lie
Within its warm nest quietly,
But ever from the full dark eye
Is looking kindly night and morn.”

“My son, I do not believe Valeria Fairleigh has ever a serious thought; nothing beyond the present enjoyment, or deeper than the devising of a becoming attire for some approaching dance or festive occasion. Believe me, she is not the girl for a minister's wife. You have chosen as your vocation the work of God; in this you should be sustained by your wife: one who would enter into your labor with energy of mind and body. She should have a heart to sympathize not only with her husband, but his charge. I tell you, David, a man's success and popularity in his ministry depends very much on the woman that he has chosen to be his helpmate. Had your mother been other than she is, I truly think I should have sunk under the many trials during the years of my work.”

“But, father, if report speaks truly, my mother was not a very sedate maiden. I have heard many a tale of her wild days. Pardon me, but I do not think you are judging Miss Fairleigh with your usual benevolence and charity. I know she is a very gay, fun-loving girl, but I believe she has a warm, true heart. I have never known her to do a heart-

less action, or turn a cold ear on any needing her sympathy."

"Lovers are prone to see only the good and beautiful," replied his father. "Of course, my son, I do not wish or expect to decide this matter for you; only to influence you, for your happiness. Will you promise me this much: do not commit yourself until you have seen more of Valeria and in some degree *test* her worth. How is it that a man of such deep thought, hard study, and so earnest and devoted to his work, should place his affections on one so very dissimilar? It is very strange to me, particularly as in the same house is her cousin, Miss Bland—just the woman for you. A well cultivated, thoroughly disciplined mind, with great energy and industry. You know well, of charities her name is always among the first; ready with time and money to help in good works. Why could you not have loved her? Why did your heart wander from the right?"

"Oh, father! *you* ask why the heart wanders! *I* know too truly *love* cannot be tutored; but will drag away the heart—often against our better judgment, and wander with it where it will—sometimes dropping on the bosom of a calmly gliding river; again amid the turbulent waves of a dark and stormy sea. Heaven grant that this last may not be the fate of mine. The true reason, however, that I became attached to Miss Fairleigh I think is this: I was so accustomed to, so tired of dignified, sedate and 'well-disciplined' young ladies, who always put on church behavior and talk only of church matters when the minister is near, that when I met her she was so different, such a bright, merry, child of nature, I was charmed!—yes, I may say, refreshed, rested. After the many sad and trying duties of our calling, father, we need some one like Vallie Fairleigh to call forth a reaction of the mind. But you shall have the promise. I will not advance a step further until I know her better."

A few days after this conversation David Carlton was sitting in his study, when his father entered, saying :

“David, I have a letter from home, hastening my return. So I shall have to cut my visit a little short. I would go away much happier, if my mind was relieved about Miss Fairleigh. I wish I could think her worthy of the position you would place her in. I have noticed you much since our conversation on that subject, and I am *sure* you are much attached to her. I have an idea to put her to a *test*, not only concerning her better feelings, but to prove the amount of influence you have over her.

“Listen : This evening is appointed for the meeting to raise funds and make arrangements relative to sending out a missionary to the——Indians. There has (you tell me) been but little interest awakened among your people on this subject. Now, if you can induce the young folks to take hold of this, it will be all right. This is also the evening of Monsieur Costello’s Grand Masquerade and the opera of Maritana. I called on Mrs. Fairleigh about an hour ago. The ladies were discussing these amusements. Miss Bland is very anxious to see that particular opera, and was trying to persuade Valeria to go with her. Mrs. Fairleigh positively forbade the ball ; so when I left the arrangement was, Miss Bland, Mrs. Fairleigh and the gentlemen were going to enjoy the music, and Valeria is to remain home ; but I very much fear *this* she will not do. Now, David, go and ask her to accompany you—urge her ; tell her how much good her influence might exert, and so on. If she consents, I have not another word to say about your loving, wooing and marrying her, if you can. Should she not consent, then ask Miss Bland. I know how anxious she is to see Maritana. Now try if she will resign this pleasure for the sake of doing good. Of course you must not let her know you have previously asked her cousin. Will you do it ? It can do no harm, and may be productive of much good.”

"Yes, father, I will put her to the *test*. But I will not promise that the issue shall decide my future course. I shall be grieved and mortified if she does not consent, but not without hope. I know she is good, and we will find it yet."

An hour more found David Carlton awaiting in the drawing-room the coming of Valeria.

Fortune favored him thus far.

"Miss Bland and Miss Fairleigh were out, but would be back soon. Miss Valeria was in," answered the servant to his inquiry, "If the ladies were home?"

In a few moments she came in smiling brightly, and saying:

"I am really glad to see you again, Mr. Carlton, for mamma and Julia said I had quite horrified you with my nonsense the last evening you were here. Indeed, you must excuse me, but I cannot possibly don dignity and reserve. Jule can do enough of that for both, and I think it is far better to laugh than be sighing."

"Indeed, I have never seen anything to disapprove of. I could not expect or wish to see the young and happy, either affecting, or really possessing the gravity of maturer years. My absence has no connection whatever with the events of that evening. I have been devoting my spare time to my father. This is his last evening with me. I came round to ask a favor of you. We are very anxious to get up some interest for the mission to——, and father thinks if the young folks of the church would aid us, it would be all right. Will you go with us?" answered David. A look of deep regret, the first he had ever seen, was in the eyes of Valeria, when she answered:

"You will have to excuse me, I have an engagement for the evening. I am really sorry, I would like to oblige you." Then breaking into a merry laugh, she said:

"Jule will go,—ask her. She dotes on missions—both foreign and home, and all sorts of Charity meetings. She has money too, I've spent every cent of mine this month already, besides all I could borrow. Yes, ask her, I know she will, and give too. I should be sure to go to sleep or get to plotting some sort of mischief against my nearest neighbor. I could do you no good, Mr. Carlton."

"Valeria! excuse me, Miss Fairleigh—will you be serious and listen to me, one moment?"

He urged, but in vain. Not even when his voice sank to low soft tones and with pleading eyes, he whispered: "Go for *my* sake," would she consent.

"At least tell me where you are going?" he asked.

"I am going to ——. No, I dare not tell. Ma and Jule would not approve, and even dear good papa, might censure, if he knew it. Here they come! Julia, Mr. Carlton is waiting to see you."

"Well David, you have failed! Your countenance is very expressive.

"Even so, sir—Miss Fairleigh not only declined, but I greatly fear she is going to the ball against her parents' wishes. If this be so, I must try to conquer this love. The girl who sets at naught the will of her kind, loving parents—acting secretly against their wishes—would not, I am sure, prove a good wife."

"Well spoken, my son. How about Miss Bland?"

"Of course *she* is going. We are to call for her."

"A good girl—resigning pleasure to duty. A rare good girl."

"Apparently so, sir; but, indeed, I am impressed with the idea there is something hidden about her. She does not seem natural," replied David.

Father and son had just arrived at Mr. Fairleigh's when the door opened to admit a middle-aged, poorly-clad

woman. Showing them into the drawing-room, the servant closed the door. Very soon after seating themselves they heard the voice of Miss Bland in a very excited tone.

"My brother! How dare you ask me of him?"

"I dare for my child's sake. She is ill—perhaps dying."

"What is that to him or me? I told you and her I would have nothing more to do with either, since her name became so shamefully connected with my brother's. Will you be kind enough to relieve me of your presence?"

"My daughter is as pure as you. Her child, and your brother's, is suffering from want. Will you pay me, at least, for our last work—the dress you have on?"

"How much?" was asked, in a sharp, quick voice.

"Five dollars."

"Outrageous! No, I will not pay that. Here are three dollars. Go, and never let me hear of you again."

"Julia Bland, I wish the world knew you as I do. You will grind to the earth your sister-woman, and give liberally where it will be known and said, 'How charitable—how good!' I say how hard-hearted—how deceitful!" said the woman, in bitter tones.

"Go!" came forth, in a voice quivering with rage.

Soon the hall-door told the departure of the unwelcome guest.

Looks of amazement, beyond description, passed between the reverend gentlemen.

At length the younger one said:

"She does not know of our arrival. I will go into the hall and touch the bell."

"Oh! excuse me, sir. I thought Miss Bland was in the drawing-room. I will tell her now," said the servant.

Could this gentle, dignified woman be the same whose harsh, hard tones were still lingering in their ears?

Impossible! thought the elder man. Surely he must be

in a dreadful, dreadful dream. Not so David: he clearly understood it all, and felt truly thankful that the blundering servant had enabled him to get this "peep behind the scenes."

The meeting was over, and they were just leaving the church when:

"Please, sir, tell me where I can find the preacher or doctor—and I've forgot which—maybe both. They frightened me so, when they hurried me off!" said a boy, running up to them.

"Here, my lad—what is it?"

"Mr. Preacher, please come with me. There is a young woman very ill—maybe dying. They sent me for *somebody*, and I can't remember; but please run, sir!"

"I will go. Excuse me, Miss Bland; father will take charge of you."

And he followed, with hasty steps, the running boy.

"Here, sir,—this is the house. Go in, sir, please!"

"Now, my lad, run over to Dr. Lenord's office—he is in—and ask him to come. So, one or the other of us will be the right one."

David Carlton entered, treading noiselessly along the passage, until he had reached a door slightly open. Glancing in to be sure he was right, he beheld lying—apparently, almost dying,—a young woman. Beside the bed, kneeling with upraised head and clasped hands, was a strangely familiar form. Then came forth a sweet voice, pleading to the throne of Mercy for the sufferer. He gazed, spell-bound, for a moment. Then slowly and softly he retraced his steps to the door. Then he almost flew along the streets until he reached Mr. Fairleigh's, just as his father and Miss Bland were ascending the steps. Seizing the former very unceremoniously, he said:

"Come, father, with me quickly—you are wanted."

In a few moments more, before the boy had returned with the physician, they stood again at the door of the sick room. David whispered :

“Look there ! listen !”

“Be still, Mary dear ! Do not worry. I shall not judge you wrongfully. How dare I ? We are *all* so sinful. That you are suffering and in need is all the knowledge I want.”

“Oh, where is William ? Why does he not come ? Why not speak and acknowledge his wife and child ? Now that I am dying, he might ! Oh, where is he ? Why will not God send him to me ?” moaned the sick girl.

“God is love, Mary. He does not willingly afflict or chastise us. Try to say, ‘Thy will be done !’

“But, dear, do not be so desponding. I know you are very sick ; but I think it more your mind than bodily illness. Try to bear up. Pray God to spare you for your baby’s sake,” softly said the comforter.

“Father, you go in and see if you can help her. I will await you outside,” whispered David.

A slight knock at the door aroused the kneeling girl, who approached and said :

“Come in, Doctor ! Why, Mr. Carlton !—I was expecting the doctor. This poor girl is very sick ; she fainted awhile ago. I was very much alarmed and sent a boy for a physician. She is somewhat better now. Come in, you may soothe her mind, and possibly do her more good than the medical man.”

“Miss Fairleigh ? Is it possible I find you here ? I thought you were at the masquerade.”

“Heaven bless her, sir,” said a woman arising from a seat beside the sufferer, whom Mr. Carlton recognized as the person he had seen enter Mr. Fairleigh’s a few hours

before. "But for her care, we should have suffered beyond endurance. She has comforted mind and body. Yes, when evil tongues whispered of shame! her pure heart did not fear, or shrink from us. When employers and friends deserted and condemned, *she* staid by and consoled."

"Hush! She has fainted again. Oh! why does not the doctor come?" said Valeria.

"Thank Heaven! Here he is now."

Mr. Carlton approached the physician (an old acquaintance,) and explained to him as well as he could the trouble. The kind-hearted doctor raised the poor, thin hand, felt the feeble pulse, and turning, answered the anxious, inquiring looks bent on him:

"It is only a swoon; yet she is very weak. However, I think we will bring her round all right in a little while."

"Indeed, she is an honest girl, Doctor, although appearances are against her now," said the mother. "Her husband left her before she was taken ill, to remain a short time with his sick uncle. Mr. Bland was fearful of offending his aged relative, and so kept his marriage concealed. She had a few letters when he first left, but, for near two months, not a word have we heard. I fear he is ill. She has grown dreadfully depressed since the birth of her babe. The suspicion resting on her, is killing her."

The suffering girl was showing signs of returning consciousness. Then a quick step was heard in the entry. She started up and cried out:

"Willie is come! Thank God," and sank back, almost lifeless.

Wm. Bland, for truly it was so, rushed forward and dropped on his knees beside the bed, saying:

"How is this? Why have you not answered my letters? Doctor save her!"

Advancing, the doctor raised her head gently and gave her a little wine, saying:

"Speak to her, reassure her; that is all she needs now."

"Listen, Mary love, dear wife, and mother!" he whispered in astonishment, as Valeria held before him the little sleeping babe, while a flush of paternal pride passed over his fine face. "There is no more need of silence, I am free and proud to claim you, darling. Uncle knows all, and bids me bring you to him. He was very ill. I nursed him and his life was spared. The fatigue, and more than all the worry of mind about you, brought on a severe nervous fever. I have been very ill. Julia knew it. Did you not hear? In my ravings I told *all*. Uncle has changed much since his recovery. He is no longer ambitious, except for my happiness, and is now waiting to welcome you."

The wonderful medicine had been administered, and already the happy effects were apparent.

With her hand clasped in her husband's she was slumbering peacefully, while a smile of sweet content lingered on the pale face.

The doctor soon bade adieu, saying:

"I see I shall not be needed any longer. She will very soon be strong again."

"Miss Fairleigh, I am awaiting your pleasure. Are you to return to your home to-night?" asked Mr. Carlton.

"Oh, yes. Bridget promised to come for me, but I must get back before mamma and Julia; yet I forget there is no further need of concealment, I am so very glad! I will be over in the morning. Good-night."

"God bless you Vallie! you have been a ministering angel to my loved ones. You can tell Julia I have returned and am with my wife. I fear my sister has acted very wickedly in this matter. I have written many times and received no answer. Some one, for whom they were not intended, got those letters. Perhaps I judge her hastily. Good-night," said William Bland.

Vallie, accompanied by Mr. Carlton, was soon on her way home. They had gone but a short distance when they were joined by David.

"Why, Mr. Carlton! how strange to meet you, when I was just thinking of you, and on the eve of asking your father, to tell you I was not at the ball this evening. I was so sorry I could not explain when you asked me. Your father will tell you all, I know. You thought me very wicked and wilful," said Vallie.

David clasped the little hand held out to greet him, and whispered:

"With your permission I will come to-morrow, and tell you what I did think and do still."

Bidding her good night at her father's door, David lingered a moment, to catch the low answer to his repeated question, "shall I come?"

Fervently thanking God, for the happy termination of the evening, he hastened to overtake his father—and said:

"Well father?"

"Well David! *Very Well*. Go ahead David, win her, if you can! She is a rare, good girl."

"Which *one*, sir?"

"Come, come! David, I am completely bewildered by this evening's discoveries. Do not bear too hard on me, for falling into a common error—mistaking the *apparent* for the *real*. This night has proved a test far more thorough than I imagined it possibly could. You may safely abide by the issue and never fear the stormy sea," answered his father.

A few months more and Vallie Fairleigh's merry voice and sweet smile resounds through, and brightens the minister's home.

David Carlton stands to-day, among the best loved and most popular of the clergy. Attributable most likely to his

“*wife’s influence*” (his father says.) I well know she has soothed many an aching heart, cheered the long, weary hours of the sick room, won the young from the path of evil, and *now* numberless prayers are ascending and begging God’s blessing on the “minister’s wife.”

IN THE HOSPITAL.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

IN the autumn of 1862 my time was constantly employed in the various hospitals of Washington. At this period of our struggle the Sanitary Commission was in its infancy, and all attentions of the kind ladies were joyfully received by surgeons and nurses, as well as by our noble, suffering boys. Immediately after the wounded from the second battle of Bull Run were assigned to the different wards in the various hospitals, I was going my rounds in the "Douglas," and after bestowing the wines, jellies, custards, and books to my old friends, I began to look up the new patients.

"Sister," I said to the kind Sister of Mercy, whose sweet, patient and motherly face was bending over a soldier to speak her words of comfort, "are there any Massachusetts boys in the new arrivals?"

"No, dear; I think not, in this ward." Then she bent lower to catch the whisper from her patient, and he pointed to the card at the head of his little bed. She looked, and answered again, "Oh! yes, here is one: Paul Ashton, 16th Mass., Co. B."

I approached the bed, and saw one of the noblest faces I had ever beheld, but not that of a Northern boy, I thought; so proud and dark—no, a true Southern face.

"You from Massachusetts?" I exclaimed.

A wan smile played around his pale lips for a moment. He saw my surprise, and answered:

"No, from Mississippi; but in that regiment:"—pointing again to the little card.

Here was a mystery, and one I could not solve just then. He was too weak to converse, but I made up my mind to devote myself to Paul Ashton from that time until he was convalescent, or, if God's will, relieved from his sufferings. After sitting by his side until the attendant came to dress his wounds, I bade him good night, and promised to see him in the morning.

On my way out I met Dr. B. God bless him! for his kindness to our boys. No woman ever was more gentle and patient. "Doctor," I exclaimed, as he was hurrying by, "stop and tell me, how is Ashton wounded? is he very ill? will he die?"

"Ah, Mrs. H., three questions in one breath. Yes, he is very ill. Three wounds in the right side and shoulder, which are draining his life away. I fear he must die. Is he one of your boys? Do all you can for him."

"May I?" I replied.

"Yes, my dear Madam; and try to keep up his spirits. I give you leave. Tell Sister L. He is a noble fellow—I am deeply interested in him."

The next day found me much earlier than usual at the hospital. To my great pleasure I found that Ashton had rested well, and was much easier than any one expected he would be. He smiled and put out his hand when I approached his bed, and motioned me to be seated. After talking to him a few moments, I found him looking at me very intently, and soon he said:

"Are you from the Bay State?"

I replied "Oh, no, I am a Southern woman. I am from Virginia."

"I thought you did not look or speak like a Northern or Eastern lady. Then why are you interested in our boys? Are you with us in feeling? Can you be a Union lady?"

"Yes, my boy, I am with you hand and heart. I cannot fight, but I can feed, comfort and cheer you. Yes, I am a Southern woman and a slaveholder. Now I see you open your eyes with wonder; but believe me, there are many like me, true, loyal woman in the South; but my particular interest in our regiments is, my father is a native of Boston; but I love all our brave boys just the same."

A look of much interest was in his face, which I was so glad to see, being so different from the total apathy of the day before.

"You are the first lady from Virginia that I have met who was not very bitter against us Yankees—it is really amusing to be called so, to a Mississippi man. Do you not feel a sympathy for the South? Your interest is with them. You against your State and I mine—we certainly are kindred spirits," he smilingly said. "We think and feel alike. It is not politics but religion my mother always taught me. Love God first and best, then my country, and I have followed her precepts, at a very great sacrifice, too. Sometimes in my dreams I see her looking approvingly and blessing me."

"Your mother, where is she?"

He pointed up, and said:

"Father, mother, both gone, I hope and trust to Heaven. I am alone—yes, yes, all alone now."

I would not let him talk any more, and finding out from the attendant what he most relished, I promised to see him the next day.

I saw him almost every day for a fortnight. He grew no worse, but very little, if any, better. On one occasion Doctor B. said:

"I do not know what to make of Ashton. He ought to improve much faster. My dear Madam, set your woman's wits at work; perhaps we may find a cure."

"I have been thinking I would try to gain his confidence. I know he has a hidden sorrow. I must for his sake probe the wound; but I fancy it is in the heart."

During my next visit I said:

"I wish you would tell me something of your life; how you came to enter the army; and indeed all you will of your Southern home."

"His face flushed, and he replied:

"No, I can not. Why should you want to know——"

Then he stopped, hesitated, and said:

"I beg your pardon. You have been so kind to me, it is due I should comply; but not now; to-morrow; I must have time to consider and compose my mind. To-morrow, please God, if I am living, I will tell you; and you will see that I have a severer wound than good Doctor B. knows of—one he cannot use his skilful hand upon."

"Well, thank you—I would rather wait until to-morrow. I am anxious to get home early this afternoon."

"On reaching his cot the next day, I saw Ashton was calm, but very pale. I said:

"Do not exert yourself this morning. I can wait."

"No; sit nearer and I will tell you all."

"I give it to you, dear reader, as he gave it to me:

"I told you I was by birth a Mississippian. My mother was from Boston; the daughter of a wealthy merchant, who, failing in his business, soon fell in ill health and died, leaving his wife and two daughters almost entirely destitute. Mother, the youngest, was always very fragile, and having been reared in luxury, was poorly calculated for a life of trial and poverty. However, she was urged by a wealthy Southern planter to return with him to his home, and take the position of governess to his little daughters; her friends all approving of this offer, knowing that a Southern climate would improve her health; so she became the inmate of

Col. Ashton's family, and soon was beloved by the father and mother, as well as her pupils. I have heard that neither the Colonel nor his wife could bear her out of their sight. She had been with them nearly a year, when the young son and heir, Edgar Ashton, returned from his college. He soon followed the rest, and was deeply in love with the governess. My mother was very beautiful, possessing so much gentleness, with such a merry disposition, that I have heard them say that grandfather used to call her his Sunshine. The negroes said that she had a charm to make all she looked upon love her. But when the son, their pride, declared his intention of making May Everett his wife, it was met with a decided objection by both parents. Impossible! marry a Northern teacher! he, the son of Col. Ashton—the heir of Ashton manor! preposterous! My mother then prepared to bid adieu to them and return to her home, never for a moment listening to the repeated petitions of her lover to marry him. She would not go into a family where she was not welcome. Her high-toned principles won for her additional love and respect. And when the hour of parting came, the old Colonel opened his arms, and drew her to his heart, and exclaimed:

“ ‘Wife, we cannot give her up. Welcome your daughter.’ ”

“My mother, however, went home; but with the understanding that she would return in a few weeks—as the wife of their son.

“In two months, she was again with them; and never a happier household! In the second year of their marriage, I was sent to them. My grandparents made almost an idol of me, and from grandfather I used to hear of his father's adventures in the Revolution. He inspired me with a devotion to his country which was fostered by my mother.

When I was sixteen, my father was thrown from his horse and brought home to us insensible, and lived with us but a few hours. My mother's health, naturally very delicate, sank under this great affliction. She lived only a year afterwards, and I was left to comfort my grandparents, now quite advanced in years. They would not hear of my going away again to school, and engaged a private tutor—a young gentleman, a graduate of Yale. I had been under Mr. Huntington's instruction four years. When the country began to be convulsed with the whispers of secession,—one State after another passing that miserable ordinance,—my grandfather said :

“ ‘Paul, my boy, if Mississippi goes out, I shall go too,—not only out of the Union, but out of this world of sorrow and trouble. I cannot live. I have felt my tie to earth loosening very fast since your grandmother left me, and I feel I cannot live any longer if my State shall be classed with traitors.’

“I have failed to tell you grandmother died in my eighteenth year. Mr. Huntington, feeling sure of what was coming, left us for his home in Medford, never for one moment expressing to us any views on the subject now engrossing all minds ; and, when parting with him, I whispered, ‘If it comes, I am for my country ! Look for me North within a few weeks.’ It did come, as you know ; and when one of my aunts—now both married—ran laughingly in, with a blue cockade pinned on her shoulders, exclaiming :

“ ‘Father, we are out !’

“She stopped in horror, and looked upon the calm, cold face. But the spirit had fled. We know not if he had heard or not, but I trust he had passed to perfect peace before his heart had been so sorely tried.

“Next to our plantation was the estate of one of the

oldest, wealthiest, and proudest families of the State. The daughter and I had grown up together, and I loved her more than all and everything else on earth. Her brother and I were very intimate,—both having no brother, we were everything to each other. He had mounted the Palmetto badge, and was all for war. My mind was no longer wavering, since my grandfather's death. I was going up North, and, after a short visit to my mother's sister—the wife of a very influential and patriotic man in Boston—I would offer myself to my Government. Now you will know my sorrow.

“I had expected to meet opposition, entreaties, reproaches, and everything of that sort. So, preparing myself as well as I could, I rode over to bid my idol good-bye.

“I met Harry first, and telling him I was going North, to leave fortune, friends, and everything for my country.

“‘What, Paul, desert your State in her hour of need? Never! You, a Southern man? Your interests, your honor, are with us.’

“Much passed between us; when he, laughingly, said:

“‘Go in and see sister; she will talk you out of this whim.’

“I cannot tell you how she first coaxed, then argued, then chided me with not loving her, and then came—oh, such contempt! You have no idea of the trial to me. She talked as only a Southern girl talks—so proud, so unyielding. And when I said:

“‘Let us part at least friends. Say God bless me, for the sake of the past!’

“‘No,’ she said, ‘no friend. With a traitor to his State, or a coward,—no, I will never say God bless you! and never do you take my name on your lips from this day. I would die of shame to have it known that I was ever loved by an Arnold! Go! leave me; and if you raise

your arm against the South, I hope you may not live to feel the shame which will follow you.'

"I met Harry again on the lawn, and he exclaimed:

"'Good-bye, Paul. Give us your hand. You are honest, and will sacrifice everything, I see; but you are all wrong. God bless you!'

And he threw his arms round me, and so I left them.

"I cannot tell you how I suffered. It seems as if I have lived a century since then. Did I not know the unbounded pride of a Southern girl, I should doubt her ever loving me. I have never mentioned her name since that day, and never shall. Now, my friend, you see I have little to live for. Soon after my arriving in Boston, the 16th was forming. I enlisted, to the horror of my aunt, as a private. My friend would have procured me a commission, but I preferred to go in the ranks and work my way up if I lived, and here is my commission, received after you left yesterday. I brought my colonel off the field, and was wounded when I went to get him.—It is a first lieutenant's; but I fear I shall never wear my straps."

"Yes, you will. You are getting better slowly, but surely; and, my friend, you must cheer up,—believe 'He doeth all things well'—have faith—live for your country. I feel that all will be well with you yet. 'Hope on, hope ever.'"

I went and saw Dr. B.; told him it was as I had thought.

"A wound that we cannot cure, Doctor."

I gave him an idea of the trouble and left.

I had become so much interested in Ashton that I had almost ceased my visits to the other hospitals, except an occasional one to the "Armory Square," where I had a few friends. I thought I would go over and make a visit there this afternoon.

I went into ward C, and, after seeing how well my boys were getting on, I inquired after the lady nurse, Mrs. A., a widow lady, to whom I had become much attached for her devotion to the soldiers.

"She has gone home to recruit her health; has been away ten days; she left the day after you were here last," replied one of the boys. "But we have, just think, in her place a lady from the South—Miss or Mrs., indeed I do not know which, for I have never heard her spoken of other than Emma Mason—But here she comes."

I had time to look at her for several moments before she came to the patient I was sitting by. She might be seventeen or twenty-seven, I could not tell. She was dressed in the deepest black—her hair drawn tightly back from her face, and almost entirely covered by a black net. Her complexion was a clear olive, but so very pale. Every feature was very beautiful, but her greatest attraction was her large, dark blue eyes, shaded by long black lashes. She came up smiling sweetly on the wounded boy, and said:

"You are looking quite bright, Willie; you have a friend, I see, with you."

I was then introduced to Emma Mason. When she smiled she looked very young. I thought her as beautiful a girl as I had ever seen; but in a few seconds the smile passed off, and there came a look of sorrow—a yearning, eager gaze—which made her look very much older. I went round with her to visit the different patients, telling her of my great interest in the soldiers, and trying to win her confidence. I was very anxious to know something of her history, but I could gain nothing; and, giving it up in despair, I bade her good evening, and was leaving the ward when she called me and said:

"Will you be kind enough to notice among the soldiers

you may meet from Boston, and if you find this name let me know immediately."

I took the card and read, Paul Ashton, 16th Mass. Vol. I started, and was about telling her where he was, when I was stopped by seeing the deathly pallor of her face.

"She said, scarcely above a whisper:

"Is he living?"

I said I was only about to tell you I felt sure I could hear of him, as I knew many of that regiment. I felt that I must not tell her then. I must find out more of her first.

She looked disappointed and said:

"I heard that regiment was in the last battle. Have you seen any since that time? I am deeply interested in that soldier; he was my only brother's most intimate friend."

I told her I should go the next day, probably, to the "Douglas," and if I had any tidings I would let her know. And so I left her, anxious to be alone, to think over and plan about this new development in Ashton's history. Who was she? Could she be his lost love? Impossible! This nurse in a Union hospital! No, never. She must be down in her Southern home. What should I do? Go tell Ashton? No, that would not do yet. So I worried about it, and at last I decided I would sleep on it, and my mind would be clearer for action in the morning.

I could not divert my mind from the idea that it must be the girl whose name I had never heard.

Next morning my mind was made up. I went over to see Ashton; found him in poorer spirits than ever. I sat down and tried to cheer him up. He said:

"I feel more miserable this morning than ever in my life before. I have a furlough for thirty days, but I do not care to take it. I am as well here as anywhere."

I said "I have often found that the darkest hours are many times followed by the brightest. Cheer up. I feel as if you would have some comfort before long, and see. Why, here you have a bouquet with so many 'heart eases' in it. Heaven grant it may be a token of coming ease and happiness. Who gave these to you? It is rarely we see them at this season."

"Sister L. gave them to me; they came from the greenhouse."

I told him I should see him again that afternoon, and taking my leave, went over to see the nurse at the armory. She came quickly forward to see me and said:

"Have you any news——"

"I have heard of him; he was in the battle and very severely wounded, but living when my friend last heard of him."

"When was that? Where is he?" she exclaimed, hurriedly. "You know more, I can see; please tell me."

I answered her:

"I will tell you all, but I must beg of you a little confidence in return. I saw him myself, and helped to nurse him—was very much interested in him; he was terribly ill and is now very, very weak—his recovery doubtful. He has told me much of his past life. Now will you not tell me what he is to you? for I see you are deeply moved."

"Did he tell you anything of the girl who drove him off without a kind word—heaping upon him reproaches and wounding his noble heart to the core? If he did, it was I. Oh! how I have suffered since! Even when I accused him of cowardice and treachery, in my heart I was proud of him. Oh, tell me where he is, that I may go to him. I have been looking for him every moment since the battle. Take me, please?"

"He is at the 'Douglas,' but very sick; I saw him not

two hours ago. I fear any sudden shock, even of joy. You are never absent from his mind; he has never mentioned your name, but he has told me much. Now tell me, will you not, how it is you are here? and then we must devise a plan to take you to him without too great a shock."

She said:

"These black robes are for my brother. He bade me do what I could for the suffering and wounded on both sides, and find Paul. I will give you a letter I received written by him a few days previous to his death. After you have read it you will then understand better why I am here."

And leaving the ward for a few moments she returned and handed me the letter. The writing plainly told that the writer was very weak. I give it to you, my dear reader, every word; I could not do justice by relating in my own style:

"SISTER—I am wounded, and must die. I have felt it for several days. The doctor and the kind boys try to cheer me up, but I've been growing weaker daily. The suffering in my breast is terrible. I had a Minnie ball pass through my left lung. I have been very much frightened about dying, and wanted to live; but last night I had a dream which has produced a great change. Now I feel sure I shall die, and am content. I am with the Union boys; they are very kind. The one next me fanned me and rubbed my side until I fell asleep last night, and slept better than I have since I've been wounded. Now, darling sister, here is my dream:—I thought I had been fighting, and having been wounded, was carried off the field and was laid under a large tree; after being there a little while I felt some one clasp my hand; looking up, I found Paul. He also had been wounded. He handed me his canteen,

and while drinking I seemed to get quite easy. There seemed to be a great mist all over us; I could see nothing for a little while. Again I heard my name called, and looking up, found the mist had cleared away, and our great grandfather (whom I knew well, from the old portrait, which we used to be so proud of, father telling us he was one of the signers of the 'Declaration,') was standing before me, but he did not look smiling like the face of the picture; but, oh! so sad and stern. In his hand he held a beautiful wreath of ivy, which he, stooping, placed on the brow of Paul, saying, 'Live, boy — your country wants you;' and stretching forth his hand, he drew me to a stand near him on which stood our old family Bible, ink and pen. He opened to the births, and putting his finger on my name, he raised the pen and marked a heavy black line over the H, and was proceeding, when his hand was caught by our old nurse, Mammy Chloe, who has been dead years, you know, who pointed over towards the west of us, and there stood a large shining cross with these words over it, 'Unless ye forgive men their trespasses, how can your Heavenly Father forgive you?' And coming up to me, put forth her hand and beckoned me to follow her. Then the old gentleman spoke and said, 'Your blood will blot out your disgrace;' and turning the leaf, he pointed to the 'Deaths,' and I read, 'On the 28th of September, 1862, Harry Clay Mason, aged 21;' and then I woke up. This is the 20th; I think I shall live until that day. Now I bid you go carry mother to somewhere North, to Paul's friends, they will be kind to her and try to comfort her, and go you and devote yourself to the suffering soldiers, and find Paul, if possible; he will live, I know; tell him how I loved him, yes, and honored him, although I thought him wrong. Tell him good-bye. And to mother, try to soften this blow as much as possible. Tell her I am happy

now. I think God will pardon me for my sins, for His Son's sake. There is a boy from my regiment expecting to be parolled, and he has promised to deliver this to you. Good-bye. God bless you, darling.

“ Lovingly,

HARRY.

“ Fairfax, Va.”

I was much affected. After a few moments I said, “ How long did he live ? ”

“ He lived, seemingly growing much better, until the afternoon of the 28th. He was then taken with hemorrhage and so passed away.” And pushing her hair back from her temples, she said—

“ These came the night I got that letter.” And I saw the numberless white hairs gleaming amid her raven locks. I said,

“ Come, we will go to him. I think you had better write a little note to him ; you know best what to say, but do not tell him you are here just yet, but something to set his heart at peace ; and I will tell him it was given me by a Southerner I found in the hospital.”

“ Yes,” she said, “ you are very thoughtful, that is just the thing.”

And she went into the ante-room, and soon came out, and giving me the note, said,

“ You know all—read it.”

And I read :—“ Paul, forgive and love me again. I shall try to come to you soon.”

So we proceeded to the “ Douglas,” and I went in, found Dr. B., told him and asked if we might venture in. He thought better to break it gently at first, and promising to stay near in case of being needed, laughingly said to Miss Mason,

“ Now if I was a Doctor of Divinity, I should be wishing to be sent for.”

Leaving her in his charge, I went in.

"Back so soon?" Ashton said. "How bright and cheerful you look!"

I sat down and said, "Yes, I have some pleasant news; I have a letter for you; I met with a Southerner who knew a friend of yours, who gave me this for you. It may be from your aunt, and you may hear from your lady love, possibly."

He caught the letter, tore off the envelope, and read. I was frightened—he never spoke a word or moved. Then "Thank God!" burst forth in heart-felt tones.

I saw he was all right. I said,

"You must now commence to think of her coming and being with you, for it is some time since that person left the South, and you may look for her any time. I was told that the family were intimate with Mr. Davis, and they were to have a 'pass' North to find 'the son.' I then told him I had wanted to prepare him, for she was really in Washington, and I had met her—she had given me the note for him. He seemed to divine all, and said,

"Bring her to me. I am strong and well now."

I sent the attendant to Dr. B.'s room, and in a few moments she was beside him.

"Forgiven!" she murmured; and, bending, pressed her lips to his pale forehead, and taking his hand, she sat on the cot beside him. There was little said, but

"Eyes looked love to eyes that spake again."

So they remained until the sun went down and it was getting quite dark, when Dr. B. came in and said,

"Ah, Ashton, you have a more skillful physician than I. She has done more for you in five minutes than I have for as many weeks. I guess you will take that furlough and commission now, Lieutenant Ashton."

He took Dr. B.'s hand, and said,

"Under God, Doctor, by your skillful hand and great kindness, with the attentions of the good friends here, I have been kept alive for this day."

Emma Mason bade him good night, saying she must go over to her boys again, and get her discharge from the surgeon in charge.

In three days, Ashton bade adieu to his friends in the "Douglas," and with Miss Mason, Dr. B., and myself, he got into the carriage waiting, directing the driver to stop at the residence of the Rev. Dr. Smith. There they were united, and received our heart-felt congratulations, and proceeded to the cars, which soon bore them to their friends North.

A few days ago a servant came to my room bringing a card.

I read: "Paul Ashton and wife."

I almost flew down to them. They were on their way South to settle up their property and provide for the old servants who remained there. Paul had returned to the army and remained until the close of the war, having reached the rank of Colonel. He is looking very well. He has been offered a commission in the regular service, but his wife says his country had him when he was needed, but she must have him now. They are taking with them the remains of poor Harry, to place beside his father in their Southern home. His mother is now quite resigned, and says she is only waiting God's will to meet her friends above.

EARNEST AND TRUE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

But still our place is kept and it will not wait;
Ready for us to fill it soon or late,
No star is ever lost we once have seen,
We always MAY be, what we MIGHT have been.

“You have never loved me, Constance, or you could not thus calmly bid me go, without one word of hope for the future. Only say, that I may some day call you mine; and I will win a name that you will not blush to bear.”

“Would to Heaven I could, Ernest; but I can see no hope of my father’s relenting. You heard how determined he was never to consent to my union with any one save Gerald. You say I have never loved you! believing this, it will not be so hard for you to leave me. It is useless prolonging this interview! Every moment brings an increase of agony, making it harder to part. Bid me good-bye, say God bless me, and go quickly; if you have any mercy for me.”

“Listen just for a moment more! Oh my darling, forgive my hasty word; but, Constance, if your love was as devoted and single as mine, you would not thus resign one who loves you only of all the world; no one shares my heart with you. I know you love me, but not as I would be loved, or you would leave father and mother and cling to me. What right has your father, or any other father, to blast his child’s happiness? Heed him not, love, but come with me. I will never let you feel a single regret. I will

love you more than all their love combined. Nay, do not turn aside—you must hear me. Think what you are doing! wrecking my happiness, casting me forth without hope, to drag out a miserable, useless existence. I may be cursed with long life. Constance, darling, come with me! With your parents it will only be a short grief—disappointed ambition—and, at the most, only the thwarting of their proud hopes. They will soon get over it; but even if they should not, in all human probability they have not the length of days to suffer that we have. Bid me hope!”

“Ernest, Heaven only knows what a severe trial this is to me. Yet your words only strengthen me in my duty. It is true, as you say, my parents are old. Can I grieve and wring their careworn hearts? No, no! What recompense can a child make her parents for all their unselfish love, care, and constant watching over, and providing for, from the first feeble baby days, to the time when they *could*, if willing, return all this, by simple duty: obedience to their will. Think, Ernest, how in my days of illness, my mother watched over and soothed me. The long sleepless nights spent over my cradle—praying God to spare her child—for what? to prove an ungrateful one! Oh no! I could look for no blessing on our union if I should be deaf to the pleading of my parents, and heedless of God’s own command.

“Perhaps some time hence they may think differently. Then, if you have not sought and won another, we may be happy. One thing you may rest assured of, I shall never wed Gerald Moreton, or any other. I obeyed my father in resigning you, but cannot perjure myself by taking the marriage vows, even at their command. Do not leave me in anger, Ernest. Let your last look be of kindness and forgiveness for the sorrow I cause you. Now, a long look into your eyes, to engrave them for ever on my heart. Good-bye—God bless you, Ernest.”

She held out her arms, and was clasped in a long, last embrace. Breaking away, she was soon lost to view among the deep shadows of the garden.

“And this is the end! This is woman’s love! Mere filial duty, I should say. Well, well, a final adieu to all thought of love. In future I devote myself to ambition, wedded only to my profession, in hope that in this I shall not meet with another such reward.”

Constance Lyle was the only child of wealthy parents. Ever since her infancy her father had cherished the hope of uniting her with his ward, Gerald Moreton, the son of a very dear friend. Gerald was left an orphan before he had reached his tenth year. When Mr. Moreton, on his death-bed, placed his son under the care of his old friend, he intimated his desire that some time in the future, the little Constance (scarcely then four years old) should bear the name of Moreton. To this Mr. Lyle readily agreed. The little Gerald was truly a noble boy, and he was much attached to him, years before having lost a son of the same age; this child of his dearest friend had, in some degree, served to fill the aching void. Again, Gerald’s prospects were very brilliant; but, to do Mr. Lyle justice, more than all this was the desire to please his friend, to make some amends for the past. In years gone by these two men had been rivals for the love of Constance’s mother.

Moreton was a high-minded, noble fellow, and when he became sure that young Lyle was the favored one, not a thought of ill-feeling entered his heart against his friend; but going to him, with his usual candor and generosity, he said:

“I shall go away for a while. It will be rather too much for me to bear witnessing your happiness, just yet. I shall get over it in time, though. Heaven bless you, dear friend, and grant you happiness and prosperity. No one will pray

for your welfare more sincerely than myself. Bid *her* good-bye for me. After a while I'll be back, to stand god-father to some of your little ones, perhaps."

He remained away three years; and then returned home, bringing with him a fair, fragile little creature, who remained with him scarce two years; leaving the little Gerald to comfort and console the bereaved man, and be a loving reminder of the gentle little dove, who had loved him so dearly, and then winged her flight above, to watch over and pray for the coming of her loved ones.

So it was that Mr. Lyle would look with no favor, or even patience on any suitor. Even when Constance herself pleaded for Ernest Ellwood, telling him she could never love Gerald other than as a brother; and if he would not give her to the one she loved, that she would remain with them, but would never wed where she could not love.

Still he remained firm in his determination to give her to his friend's son or no one.

Years passed by—but she continued as firm and determined in her resolve as her father in his.

Gerald, like his father, was a noble fellow. He loved Constance, but when he found his love was a source of grief to her, he began to set himself to work to devise means of rendering her path in life rather more pleasant. She did not murmur at her self-sacrifice; this she considered her duty; but the constant and continual entreaties for the marriage wore upon her, and made her life almost miserable.

Gerald told Mr. Lyle he must beg to resign all pretensions to Constance; that upon examining his heart, he found out that it was as a sister he loved her, and was not willing to render her unhappy by making her his wife. If his father were living he would not wish it. That he thought a promise, made to the dead, had much better be broken, than kept by making the living miserable.

So, to carry out his views, he left home for a summer trip. After being absent three months, he wrote to Constance that he had decided to remain awhile longer; and at the end of another month, came a letter to Mr. Lyle, saying that he was about to be married—desiring certain business arrangements to be made—and ending by the remark, that he knew that this marriage would not meet with the cordial approval of his kind guardian, and for this he was truly sorry; but was more than compensated for this by the knowledge that he had the best wishes of his dear sister, Constance, and begged Mr. Lyle to try and render her happy, in return for her unhappiness during the last ten years.

This was a dreadful blow to Mr. Lyle, and he declared that if Ernest Ellwood had not crossed their path, that his dearest hopes would not have been thwarted. Not for a moment did he relent.

Constance had heard nothing from Ernest since she parted from him, except once, about five years after. She picked up a Western paper, and saw his name mentioned as one of the rising men of — State—an extract from a political speech made by him—and finally the prediction of a brilliant career for this young man, whose talents and eloquence were placing him before the people, who, even now, in so young a man, recognized a master-spirit; and in all probability very shortly he would speak for his adopted State in the halls of the national Capitol.

This slip was cut out and treasured by her—and once when her father was grumbling and predicting bad luck to his evil genius, as he called him, she brought forth and displayed, with a grateful heart, this notice to prove she had not loved unworthy.

Her father listened with interest to the extract from the speech and the comments relative to the speaker. He had

been considerable of a politician, and as Ernest was of the same party as himself, he felt really glad of his brilliant prospects.

"In all probability he is married long ago, and has almost, if not quite, forgotten you, Constance. At any rate, you see your sending him off did no hurt. Men are sensible; they don't die of love. Something more formidable, in the way of disease, must attack to carry them off, or affect their minds, either. Yes, yes, child, be sure he has transferred his affections long ago," remarked the father.

"I cannot tell, father. Perhaps it is so; *you* can judge of man's constancy better than I. If I judged him, it would be by my own heart, then I should be sure he is not married. I think that when alone, and freed from the care and toil of business, or, at rest from his studies, that his mind wanders back to the girl of his love. No! no! he has not forgotten me."

One after another of the joyous new years rushed into the world, passing on to maturity, growing older, and finally passing out; leaving the gentle, submissive girl, as they had found her, devoting herself to her father.

Now disease had settled on Mr. Lyle. For years he had been an invalid, nervous, fretful and impatient. No one but Constance could suit him. Not even his wife. Her gentle hand, only, could soothe his suffering. Her soft, loving tones, alone would quiet his paroxysm of nervousness.

Time passed on, and Death entered the home of Constance, not to disturb the long suffering father; but taking the apparently healthy mother. Swiftly, quietly, and without suffering, she passed from her slumbers to the home of her Maker.

This was a terrible trial for the poor girl. She almost sank under it; but in a little while she rose above her own sorrows. Bowing with submission to the will of God, she

now felt why it was her young hopes had been blasted. Before all was dark. Now she saw plainly. She alone was left to cheer and solace the stricken father! No longer a single regret lingered in her heart. All was well. A holy calm broke over her, and she became almost happy, blessed with an approving conscience.

Suffering at last softened the stern nature of Mr. Lyle, and opened his eyes to the value of his child. He knew her devotion, her patient, untiring attendance on him, and he felt what a blessed boon she had been to him, and how illy he had merited so much loving kindness!

On one occasion he said:

"My daughter, I do not deserve such a blessing as you are to me. I have been very harsh and relentless, and caused you much sorrow; would that I could call back the past, and act differently. Heaven only knows how grieved I am for my mistaken views and actions."

Going up, and putting her arms around him, she replied;

"Do not worry about the past, father dear, nor about your daughter. Believe me I am happy with you; and have no regrets. I would not be absent from you during your suffering, even to be with *him*."

"Where is Ernest? Do you love him still?" he asked.

"I only know (through the papers) that he has been elected to Congress. About my still loving him! depends entirely on whether I have the *right* to do so: he may have given that to another," she replied, and called to her beautiful lips a sweet smile, to try to convince him, more than her words would, that she was content, whate'er her lot should be.

It is a few weeks after the meeting of Congress. All Washington is on the *qui vive* about the passage of the ——— Bill, and the appeal to be made in its favor by the new member from ———

Constance Lyle stands before her mirror. More than usual care has she bestowed on her toilet.

We will play eavesdropper, dear reader, just for once, and peep over her shoulder, to view the changes time has made. No longer the fresh, brilliant beauty of her youthful days. Constant confinement in the sick room, care, and anxiety have faded the roses that used to bloom on her cheeks; but to us she is more charming, this pale beauty, with her gentle dignity, and sweet patient look, than the bright, merry girl of years ago.

There is something about her which makes us think we would like ever to be near her, side by side, to pass on life's pathway, feeling sure her beauty would never wane, but wax purer and brighter as she neared her journey's end. Listen! She says:

"How strange my birthday should be the one for *his* speech! This day I shall see him for the first time for fifteen years. Yes, I am thirty-three to-day, and this is the anniversary of our parting!"

Leaving her room she is soon by her father's side.

"I'll have to go early, father, dear. It will be very crowded, and Gerald is waiting. His wife is going to stay with you during my absence."

"How well you look, my daughter! Why, really, you are getting young again!"

"This is my birthday, father. I am a maiden of no particular age to the public, but I whisper in your ear privately," she joyously said; and, suiting the action to the word, bent down, whispered, kissed him, and was gone.

"How time flies! But she is still very beautiful. Heaven grant my prayers may be answered. She deserves to be happy; and when I am gone she will be very lonely, and then feel keenly my harsh treatment," he murmured.

Wearily passed the hours until he heard her light step

on the stairs. She came in. He thought there seemed a shadow on her face, but she came forward, and said, pleasantly :

“ Well, father, you are likely to keep your daughter. I heard Ernest. I had not expected too much ; he was grandly eloquent. He has altered in his looks ; he seems much older, and is quite gray ; mental work and hard study, he says.”

“ Then you saw him, and spoke to him ! What do you mean by saying I shall keep you ? Is he mar——”

“ Yes,” she replied, before he had finished his question. “ He introduced me to his daughter, a little miss of about twelve ; so you were right when you said that men were too sensible to suffer for or from love. He must have married in two years after he left us. Gerald left little Constance and me in the library, and went and brought him to see us. We were with him only a very short time, when he was sent for. He excused himself, and bade us Good-day. Now, father, I will remove my wrappings, and order dinner.”

Day after day passed on, and Constance had schooled herself to think of Ernest only as a happy husband and father. She did not blame him for taking a companion. He was away from all kindred and friends, and she had given him no hope to induce him to wait through all these years for her.

One day, just a week after their meeting at Congress, she was sitting reading to her father, when a servant entered, and handed a card. She read, Ernest Ellwood !

Paler for a few moments, and tightly pressed were the sweet lips. She did not rise from her seat, until she had communed with her heart. Now, she thought, I must call up all my fortitude and self-control, and prove to Ernest, to

my father, and, more than all, to myself, that my heart is not troubled !

"Father," she said, "Ernest is below. He is waiting, probably, to inquire after you. I told him you had long been an invalid. Will you see him ?"

"I would rather not, darling, unless you wish it. Go down awhile, and if he must come up, let me know first."

Slowly she descended the steps, passed through the long hall, and entered the drawing-room, advancing with quiet dignity to welcome the distinguished representative.

He listened a moment to her words, so calm and cold ; then, clasping her in his arms, he drew her down beside him, and said :

"Oh, my darling ! thank heaven, I find you still Constance Lyle !"

She tried to draw herself away from his side, but his arms held her tightly, and his hand clasped hers. His eyes were gazing so earnestly and lovingly in hers, as in by-gone days. She tried to speak, but he said :

"Nay, my beautiful love, you must not move or speak until you have heard me through, and then I shall await your verdict. I know you think it so strange that I have not been to you before. I have been the victim of a miserable mistake. The day I entered this city I walked past here to catch a glimpse of you perhaps. As I neared the door, I beheld seated on the steps that pretty little girl that I afterwards saw with you. I stopped, spoke to her, and asked her name. Constance, she told me, and her father's Gerald. Oh, my love, the long years of suspense were ended to me then ! I cannot tell you how dark the world seemed to me then. I struggled on, however, with my sorrows. Then I met you. Your being with Gerald and having the little one with you only too truly proved that my conjecture was right. I saw you, as I believed, the

happy wife of Gerald, and knew no difference until this morning. When I met him then, he stopped and urged me to come and see him. I asked after his wife, and remarked that time had changed her but very little, when, to my amazement, he said he did not know I had ever met Mrs. Moreton. Then came the explanation. I parted with the noble fellow only a few moments ago, and here I am now. Tell me, love, that all my waiting—never wandering from my love for you for an hour has not been in vain. Speak, love!”

“Ernest Ellwood, what mean you by speaking to me thus? Allow me to rise. Your mind is certainly very much affected. Nothing but insanity can excuse this language to me. I will order the carriage to convey you home to your wife and daughter.”

“My wife!—oh, yes, now I know. Gerald told me. We have all been very busy blundering. My darling, I have no wife or daughter. Louise is only mine by adoption. Her father was my dearest friend. This little one was placed in my arms, an orphan, when only three years old—and she knew no parent but myself. Can I go to your father, love?”

She no longer tried to release herself from his arms. Lower and lower drooped the beautiful head until it was pillowed on his breast. He felt her heart throbbing against his own, and almost bursting with its fulness of joy. He was answered—rewarded for all the years of waiting.

At length she raised her head. In her eyes he saw all the love of years beaming there.

“At last, *my* Ernest,” she said. “I must go to father first and prepare him to see you.”

Springing lightly up the stairs, she entered the room and stood beside her father’s arm-chair.

He saw her beaming look, and said :

“What is it, Constance ? What has brought this great joy to you ? You look so happy.”

“Father, we have all been under a great mistake. Ernest has never been married. That was his adopted daughter. He is waiting to see you ; may I bring him up ? ”

“Yes, yes. Thank God ! my prayers are answered.”

In a few moments she stands before him, with her hand clasped in Ernest’s.

“Here I am again, Mr. Lyle, as in years gone by ; pleading for your blessing on our love. May I have her now, after all these years of waiting ? ”

“Ernest Moreton, I am profoundly thankful to Heaven for sparing me to see this day. Welcome back to your home and old friends, and welcome to the hand of my daughter. Take her ; she has been a loving, patient, dutiful child. She has brightened and cheered my path for a long, weary time, and now I resign this blessing to you, and beg your forgiveness, for these long years, lost to both, which might have been passed happily together.”

“Not resign, but only share with me, this blessing ; she shall never leave you, sir,” replied Ernest.

“Father, do not speak of years *lost* ; they have *not* been. Ernest would not have gone away, and devoted himself to study, if we had been united then ; just think then what his adopted State would have lost ? and I have been cheering *you*—think what you would have lost without your little Constance ! Nay, there is nothing lost ; all is gain, and simply by keeping God’s command, ‘Honor thy father and thy mother.’ ”

“Let me come in to rejoice with you all, and make my speech,” exclaimed the noble Gerald, grasping the hand of each. “I say that they are worthy of each other. He by

his earnest, unwavering love for his lady fair, and earnest, untiring endeavors to serve his State—who has now won the respect and confidence of his countrymen—he alone is worthy of the woman ever *constant* to her early love, yet never faltering in her chosen path of filial duty.”

WHY HE WAS MERCIFUL.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us ;
He knows each chord—its various tone ;
Each spring—its various bias ;
Then at the balance, let's be mute—
We never can adjust it ;
What's done, we partly may compute—
We know not what's resisted.—ROBERT BURNS.

“How is it, my old friend, that you are so very lenient to these young thieves? Your sentence was very unexpected. Every one thought you would, at *least*, send them to the State's Prison for three or four years. The young rascals were amazed themselves. The House of Correction, for six months, has not much terror for them. Do you know that it has become a common saying, among the members of the bar, that our venerated and respected judge has a strong sympathy—in a word, a ‘fellow feeling’—for all young thieves! I think you will have to commit a few of those gentlemen for contempt.”

“I do not wonder, at all, Mr. Archer, at any, indeed, *every* one, thinking and *saying* as much,” said Mrs. Morley, the wife of the judge, just entering the room in time to hear the concluding part of Mr. Archer's remarks. “Only a few months ago the judge could not possibly help sentencing a boy to the State's Prison; but, before the time for entry came, he succeeded in getting his pardon; and, more than

this, he has brought him here, into his own home-circle, with the idea of reforming him."

"My dear wife, have you any cause, so far, to think I shall fail? Has not the boy proved grateful and worthy?" asked the judge, in a mild, though very sad, voice.

"Yes, yes; but how *you* can have any patience with such characters, I cannot imagine," answered his wife.

"Sit still, Archer, if you have no engagement; I am going to tell my wife a little story, which will probably explain my charity towards those unfortunate youths that you have spoken of; and, indeed, *all* such. You, as my oldest and most valued friend, shall share the hearing, if you wish."

"Many thanks for the privilege, with my deep appreciation for your kindness in thinking of me thus," returned Mr. Archer, warmly, at the same time resuming his seat.

"The story I have to tell you came under my immediate observation. I was quite well acquainted with the principal character.

"Very many years ago, and nor far distant from this city, lived an orphan boy, scarce fifteen years of age—bereaved, at one cruel blow, by a prevailing epidemic, of both parents, and left to the care of an uncle, (his father's brother) a hard, cruel man.

"A few hundred dollars, quite sufficient, however, to support and continue the boy's studies, for a few years, was left in the hands of the uncle. But of this there was no proof—no will or last testament was left.

"Death came so swiftly there was little time for aught save an appealing look from son to brother, and the pleading voice murmured:

"'Be a father to my boy. Oh! deal justly, kindly towards him.'

"In a very few days the sensitive mind of the poor boy too truly perceived that he was not a welcome inmate. Be-

fore a month had passed he was withdrawn from school; his love of study was discouraged; in fact, made a source of ridicule; and his time so completely taken up with hard work on the farm, there was no chance for aught else.

“On one occasion George (we will call him) ventured a remonstrance with his uncle—alluding to the money in his possession to be used for George’s education and support. Judge of his amazement and indignation when the bad man denied having one dollar in trust for him, and ended by calling him a pauper, and saying he would have to work for his bread.

“The future, there, was very plain to George: a life of ignorance—nothing higher than a mere farm drudge. His mind was determined against *that*. Privation, suffering, death, even, were preferable. The next day found him a fugitive from injustice and dishonesty—a lonely traveller on the path of life. Seeking Fortune, to find, and be treated by that whimsical goddess with good or ill. To be smiled or frowned upon, to be mounted upon the triumphing waves, rising higher and higher, until he had reached the pinnacle of Fame, or drifted about, sinking lower and lower in the dark waters, at last reaching the pool of Dishonesty, Despair, Death!

“Ah! who could tell which fate would be his?

“Oh! how I can sympathize with all such! Looking back on my own pathway to manhood. Remembering the dangers, temptations and numberless snares that youths have to encounter. In fact, to pass through a fiery furnace! And how very few are they, that come forth, unscarred, and purified!

“Remembering this, I exclaim, “How was *I* saved? And then my heart almost bursting with gratitude, forces the words to my lips,—by God’s mercy alone!

“Taking with him a few favorite books—a change of

linen—he bade adieu to the home so laden with bitter memories.

“A day’s weary travel brought him to the city of L—. Here, for many days, until the Autumn came on, he managed to subsist—doing little chores, carrying a carpet-bag or bundle—earning enough to sustain life merely, and sleeping in the depot or market-house.

“At length the cold days and colder nights came on: work was very hard to find, and our poor boy’s fortitude was severely tried.

“The day of his trial, his direst temptation came! For twenty-four hours he had not tasted food. A cold, bleak, night was fast approaching. One after another of his books had gone to get a piece of bread. Now nothing was left but starvation or—the boy dare hardly breathe it to himself—or dishonesty!

“He *must* have food somehow. Loitering about the depot, watching a chance to earn a few pennies, he saw a gentleman alight from a carriage, take out his pocket-book, pay the driver, and return it, as he supposed, to his pocket.

“It was almost dark, yet the eager eye of the hungry boy saw what had escaped the driver’s.

“There, in that gutter, lay the surety against suffering for that and many coming nights.

“He was about to rush forward and secure the prize—the lost pocket-book; but caution whispered, ‘Be sharp! you may be seen.’ And then, with the cunning and slyness of an old thief—thus suddenly taught by keen suffering—he sauntered along, crossing the gutter, stumbled and fell; then put out his hand, covered and secured his treasure, slowly arose, and feigning a slight lameness, he retraced his steps towards the depot, entered the waiting-room, which he felt sure would be unoccupied at that hour. Getting behind the warm stove and close to the dim lamp,

he opened the pocket-book—gold! notes! tens, twenties—over a hundred dollars met his gaze! When had he seen so much? His—all his! Had he not found it? Possibly he might have overtaken the owner and restored it, but what was the use of throwing away good luck! But already Conscience was at work. Turning over the notes he found a little silken bag. Opening it, he drew forth a miniature painting of a beautiful little girl, and on the back was written:

““Our darling! three years old to-day.”

“It was a lovely, angelic face. The boy was fascinated, spell-bound by it. Long he gazed. He grew very uneasy. His bosom heaved convulsively. There were signs of violent emotion, and then burst forth the words:

““I have *not* stolen it. Who says so? I *found* it!”

“Again he looks almost wildly at the picture; then whispered hoarsely:

““She says, “Thou shalt not steal!” Can this be stealing? No—*no*, it is not. It is luck. I am growing nervous from long fasting. Oh, heavens, how hungry I am! Bread, bread! I must have bread or die!”

“Taking out a few small coins, he closed the pocket-book, putting the little miniature in his bosom; then walked as swiftly as his failing strength would allow; reached, and was about to enter, an eating-house. At the door, he hesitated; and, drawing forth the little picture, looked again at the baby-face. Now, to his eye, she has grown older; and the face is so sad, with such an appealing look, which speaks to his inmost heart.

“The blue eyes were no longer the laughing ones of childhood; but, oh!—yes, it was really so—his mother’s lovely sad face was before him! The same sweet quivering lips, which seemed whispering so earnestly:

““Thou *shalt* not steal!””

"Thrusting the picture back to its hiding-place, he sank exhausted from violent emotion and extreme weakness down on the stone steps.

"Oh, the terrible struggle that was going on in that young breast!

"The tearing pangs of hunger, the sharp stinging thrusts of conscience were warring for the victory. Oh, those who have never known the pangs of hunger can but poorly imagine that fearful struggle. At last, thank God! Conscience triumphed. Honesty was victor.

"Bursting into tears, he murmured :

" 'God forgive, and have mercy ! Mother—little angel-girl smile on me ! ' "

"He returned the coin to the book, and clasping it tightly, replaced it in his pocket.

" 'I will not touch one cent ; and in the morning, if I live so long, I will find some means to restore it to the owner—all but the little picture—that *angel-child* has saved me, and I must keep her to watch over me in the future.' "

"Slowly he arose, and was proceeding along the street, thinking he could at least return and sleep in the depot, when a loud noise attracted his attention.

"A horse came dashing furiously along the street, drawing after him a buggy in which was crouching a lady almost lifeless with terror. Thoughts as swift as lightning flashed through his mind : he *might* save her—what though he was trampled to death. Then he surely would be relieved from suffering !

"Summoning up all his little strength—then wonderfully increased by excitement and manly courage, he rushed forward, faced the frightened little animal, seized the reins, and was dragged some distance, still holding firmly on—sustaining no injury save a few bruises—until he succeeded in

checking the wild flight. He saw his advantage; then, with a kind voice, he spoke to the horse, patting and rubbing his head and neck, until he became quite gentle. George knew the poor fellow was not vicious, but frightened at something he had seen or heard.

“In a few moments he was joined by a crowd—among whom came a gentleman limping and wearing a look of great anxiety.

“George knew his thoughts, and said:

“‘The lady is not at all hurt, sir, only frightened.’

“Several had seen the boy’s action, and the owner of the horse soon understood all about it. Many were his words of grateful acknowledgment, and warmly shaking the boy’s hand, he pushed into it a half-eagle.

“Looking at this a moment, again tempted by hunger, he hesitated—then exclaimed:

“‘No, thank you, sir, I cannot take it. I am amply rewarded by having succeeded in helping the lady.’

“‘Oh, *do* let us do something to prove our thanks. You look so weary, and indeed, almost sick. Tell us *how* can we serve you,’ said the lady, who had not spoken until then.

“These kind words brought tears to the boy’s eyes; he tried to speak but his voice failed.

“‘Come, my boy,’ said the gentleman, ‘it is growing very cold. We live only a short way from here. I shall lead my horse, and you must follow on. Supper is waiting for us; and after we have been refreshed by a cup of hot coffee and something substantial, I shall insist on being allowed to prove my thankfulness, in some way or other.’

“This kindness, George had neither the strength nor the will, to refuse.

“Following on, he soon reached with them, the house of Doctor Perry. Such a supper the famished boy had not seen since his parents’ death, and he did full justice to it.

“The doctor’s delicate kindness, and cordial manner so won on the boy, that during the evening he told him his whole story, of his hard struggles and dreadful temptation, and ended by producing the pocket-book, and asking the doctor’s advice as to the manner of restoring it.

“His kind friend suggested that there might be some clue to be found inside as to whom it belonged.

“Opening it, George carefully examined every part, and sure enough, found a card with the probable name and address of the owner.

“‘Now, my boy, it is too late to-night, but in the morning you can go find the place, inquire for the lady, and then ask “if her husband left last night in the train for—” If he did, then you may know you have found the right person. Now about yourself, your future. What are your ideas?’

“‘Oh! sir, if I could only earn enough to support me and get into the City Academy. I should be the happiest boy alive. But it is so hard to get a permit. I know I am quite far enough advanced to be able to keep up with the boys. I could live on bread alone to be able to acquire knowledge,’ said the boy, with great earnestness.

“‘I am thankful, my young friend, I can now find a way to serve you. I am one of the directors of that Institution. You shall be entered, and obtain all the advantages it offers.

“‘I see you are a proud boy and must feel that you are earning your living. Come here to me every morning before, and after school has closed in the afternoons. I wish you to take care of my office, and keep my things in perfect order for me. What say you to this, and then getting your meals with us?’

“Oh! what joy was in that hitherto sorrowful heart.

“Words could not express it; but clasping the doctor’s hands, he pressed them to his heart, and pointed upwards.

“His friend knew how grateful he was, and how very happy he had made him.

“Oh! had not God heard his prayer and speedily answered it. Mercy, how freely, how bountifully it was bestowed on him.

“At last the words burst from his lips: ‘Oh, God I thank Thee.’

“Early the following morn the pocket-book was restored; everything save the miniature. This he kept; yet all the while feeling keenly that he was guilty of a theft. Yet in this he did not feel that God was offended. And often as he gazed at his little ‘guardian angel,’ as he called her, he would say, smilingly :

“She does not look reproachfully or seem to say, ‘Thou shalt not steal me.’

“His mind was determined on the purpose to work every spare moment, night and day, denying himself in every way, until he had secured money sufficient to get the picture copied, and then return the original.

“Months passed on, prosperity smiled on him. His best friend, the Doctor, had full confidence in him. His teachers encouraged and approved. All was well.

“His miserable lodgings were before long resigned for a comfortable room in the happy home of Doctor Perry, who insisted on this arrangement. Saying :

“‘George, your services fully repay me—my little son loves you dearly, and has wonderfully improved in his studies, since he has been under your charge. We want you with us as much as possible.’

“Now, only one thing troubled him. The stolen picture.

“At length he accomplished what once seemed an almost impossible thing. The picture was copied and paid for; and George started to return the original, the one that had rested in his bosom so long. How he loved it.

"It was a great sacrifice for him to give up *that*, and retain the copy. However, he was somewhat compensated by the result of his errand.

"'Twas the fifth birthday of the little girl, and well he knew it. Ascending the steps of her father's house, he rang the bell which was soon answered by a servant, and behind him came a bevy of little girls, the foremost being the original of his picture, his little 'guardian angel.'

"'More presents for me?' she asked, as he handed the precious parcel into her tiny hands, extended for it.

"'No, little one, for your father! Will you tell me your name?' he asked.

"'Oh, yes! My name is——'

"'What was it?' eagerly asked Mrs. Morely.

"'Why are you so anxious? I'll punish you a little for interrupting me, by not telling you,' answered the judge, playfully.

"'Well, well, no matter, only go on,' answered his wife, showing plainly how deeply she was interested in his story.

"The little one held out her hand, saying:

"'I am five years old to-day. Shake hands with me, Mr. —I do not know your name. Every one shakes hands and kisses me to-day.'

"The youth clasped the dear little hand—(held forth with the sweet innocence of childhood, and combined with a dignity well worthy of a maid of twenty,) and pressed on it a pure kiss, at the same time breathing to himself the vow that with God's blessing and help, to win such a position that should enable him to seek, and know this child in her home. To try and make himself worthy of her. To win her love, and in years to come to have her as his 'guardian angel' through life.

"Often he would get a glimpse of her at the window or the door, this giving him encouragement to work on.

“Another year he was taken as assistant in the primary department of the academy, this giving him a small income.

“In two more years, he had graduated with the highest honors.

“His mind had long been determined in favor of the law. His most ardent wish to get in the office and read with the father of ‘his little love,’ then a very distinguished lawyer.

“This desire he made known to Doctor Perry, who readily encouraged it, saying :

“I have no doubt, George, that you can succeed, backed by such letters as we can give you. This gentleman is very kind and courteous, and I think has no one with him at present. If I am not very much mistaken, after you have seen and talked with him a short time, it will be all right.

“And so it proved. In a few days more George was studying under the same roof with, seeing and speaking daily to the child of all his dearest, highest aspirations.

“Very soon the little maid of eight years became very fond of him.

“George rose rapidly in the respect and esteem of his instructor, and in a few months a deep and sincere attachment existed between them. Subsequently our young friend entered the Bar, and was looked upon as a man of fine promise ; his career upward was steady, and finally, after eight or ten years’ practice, he was among the best of his day.

“All these years of toil and study were for laurels to lay at the feet of the one who had so unconsciously saved him and encouraged him “onward.” Nothing now prevented the fruition of all his hopes. A little while longer, and the living, breathing, speaking guardian angel was all his own—blessing his heart and house, filling his very soul with the purest love, the most profound gratitude to God, by whose infinite mercy he was thus almost miraculously saved.

And to prove his gratitude and thankfulness, he has endeavored constantly to win the erring from sin, to encourage and sustain the penitent, to try and soften the hardened heart, and finally as much as possible to ameliorate the suffering and punishment of the guilty and condemned. Truly knowing how very many are tempted as much and more than the hero of my story, without the interposition of such a special Providence."

The Judge had finished. Mrs. Morely arose, and passing her arm around her husband, pressed her lips to his, earnestly and with deep emotion, saying :

"I long since recognized the noble suffering boy of your story. My husband, forgive my having ever questioned your actions or motives. In the future I will try to prove my worthiness of your love, by aiding you in all your works of mercy."

"My old friend, and of all the most respected and honored, if it were *possible* your story would increase my veneration," said Mr. Archer, grasping and pressing the Judge's hand.

"I would to Heaven there were more like you. If so, the temptations and snares which surround the path of youth would be less terrible and frequent—in a word, our whole community a little nearer, as God would have us be."

TWO MEMORABLE THANKSGIVING DAYS.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn.—TENNYSON.

“DRAW near me, William, I have so much I want to say, and now I feel too truly, how rapidly I am drifting away. When I close my eyes, I see so many happy, familiar faces, just a little way above, in the clouds. They are beckoning me away. Tell me, what day is this?”

“Thanksgiving, dear. But pray, do not talk so. You are not going to leave me yet, Mary. You will be, you *are* better,” said her husband, bending sorrowfully over her.

“Yes, I will be *well*, soon. I shall not see to-morrow’s sun. Promise me, my husband, to try and make our boy feel, as little as possible, his loss. Be to him, what I have been. He is a strange, shy child; and reminds me much of my own childhood. You scarcely know him, you have been so completely absorbed in your business all the time. Be with him, have him more with you. There is no need now of your being such a slave to business. You are prospering, you will be rich. Oh! do not let your heart become so encased in gold, as to render it inaccessible to all higher, better feelings. In years to come, another will occupy my place, but oh! William, do not let those new ties come between you and your first-born. Give me your hand, and with it the pledge to make his welfare your first thought.

“Thank you, dear; you have lifted a great weight from

my heart. The only doubt is cleared away. Here, put our wedding ring on your finger! how tight it fits! It will be a constant reminder of your pledge. Now bring Willie to me."

She gradually faded away during the afternoon, murmuring constantly words of love and hope, the last intelligible being, "Love each other for my sake."

As the Thanksgiving sun went down, the spirit of the gentle, long suffering Mary Archer joined the waiting ones above.

William Archer truly loved his young wife, and sincerely mourned her loss. Much of his time was spent with his son, in trying to comfort and divert the attention of the sorrowing boy from his great loss.

Willie grew to love very dearly his father, hitherto almost a stranger to him.

Mary's words were soon verified. Riches grew rapidly around him, and in less than two years he had filled her vacant place by another.

With what an acute ear, jealous eye, and aching heart, he listened for every word of endearment, watched every action of love, that his father bestowed on his new wife. Willie was not a boy to win the heart of a stranger. Retiring, silent, and sad, but possessing a brave, grateful heart, he had to be known, to be loved. The new mother did not care to take the trouble to win the love of her husband's child.

Years rolled on. Bright, cheerful, happy boys, and beautiful, loving girls grew round the father's heart, claiming and winning his love, until poor Willie was almost forgotten, or only remembered when in sight, and then always compared so unfavorably with the merry ones around him.

On one occasion, some temporary ailment, caused the father's hand to become very much swollen, until the little

wedding ring became very tight and pained his finger much. His wife suggested its being filed off. While debating on the necessity of so doing, there came memories of the past. The long forgotten pledge, the reminder of which was making him feel it so keenly then. How had he fulfilled that promise.

He would not have the ring removed. The swelling gradually passed away. And William Archer determined to make amends for his past neglect by future care and attention to his motherless boy.

But these good intentions were put to a speedy flight by an unfortunate accident which occurred that afternoon.

Constant difficulties and childish quarrels arose between the little ones, Willie always being the erring one, both with the mother and nurses. If a child fell and was hurt, "Willie did it." In a word the poor boy was the "scape-goat."

The children were playing in the large grounds surrounding their future elegant home. Willie was just twelve years old then. The nurse was attending the younger ones. A little way from the house was a large pond with a rustic bridge. Mr. Archer had frequently warned the nurse of the danger in allowing the children to play about there. Little Eddie, a merry, wilful boy, of six years, disregarding all Willie's entreaties to come away, would amuse himself by "riding horseback," as he called it, on the railing of the frail bridge, and tossing up his arms with a shout of defiance and laughter, he lost his balance and fell into the water, quite deep enough to drown a much larger boy.

A scream from the little ones brought the nurse to a knowledge of the truth.

"Eddie's in the water. Eddie's drowned."

In a moment Willie's jacket was off and he plunged in, and before the terrified nurse could collect her thoughts,

brought out and placed the insensible boy on the grass, before her.

Catching up the child, she rushed to the house and placing him in his mother's arms, declared, to screen her own negligence, that,

"Willie had pushed his brother in the pond."

Willie, following on with the other children, entered the house, his young heart proudly glowing with the knowledge of having done a good, brave action, and saying to himself:

"Now this will surely please papa, and make Eddie's mother love me a little."

Poor boy! He was met by eyes and harsh upbraiding words—which for a moment quite bewildered him.

"You have killed your brother! You cruel, unnatural child," cried the mother.

"Out of my sight, boy," said his father in low, threatening tones.

"Oh, father, what do you mean? Let me tell you how it was."

"Begone, sir," and the enraged man gave poor Willie a blow, which sent him reeling into the hall.

Staggering up to his room, and throwing himself on the bed, he wailed forth, in heart-rending tones:

"Oh, mother, mother! I wish I was with you! Others can die, why not I! No one loves me! Oh, I wish I were dead!"

Tired and exhausted by the exertions in the water, he soon fell asleep and remained so until the sun was just rising next morning.

All his sorrow, all the injustice of the night before came rushing back to his mind.

Hastily dressing himself, and then taking from his desk paper and pen, he wrote:

"You have told me to get out of your sight, father. I shall. You will never see me again. You need not search for me. I am going to try and find my mother. When Eddie is better, you will hear the truth, and feel your injustice to

WILLIE."

Folding this, and leaving it on his table, he stole down and made his way into town, not quite determined *what* to do. His first thought was to seek the river, and in its quiet waters end his sorrows. Oh, why would not Death come to him?

How quiet the city was! Usually so many were stirring about at that hour. No market wagons or bread carts about. Oh, now he remembered it was Thanksgiving day.

On he walked, and then came in sight the church where his mother used to go, and then memories of all her holy teachings. Should he find her, if he attempted self-destruction?

What could he do? He could not live on! Surely God would forgive him!

Then he thought he would go once more into that church, and then—Heaven only knows what next. Waiting in the park until church time, he retraced his steps, and reached the door just as the beautiful hymn, "Come ye disconsolate," rose into the air.

Going in while the words:

"Here bring your wounded hearts"

filled his ear, he crept up into the gallery and seated himself near the choir.

He grew somewhat calm, and his mind was, for the time, diverted from his sorrows by the sight of a little girl seated beside one of the singers—her mother, he thought.

The happy, beaming face of the little one interested him very much.

The services over, he followed close behind her, endeavoring to get another look at her, wondering if she was ever sad! And standing at the church door as she was about to enter a carriage waiting, in which a lady and gentleman were already seated, he thought:

“Oh, what kind, loving parents she must have to make her look so joyous!” His face wore a very sad expression. The little girl turned, caught the sorrowful look bent on her, then stepped suddenly back, went up to our Willie, and said, with the winning grace and perfect simplicity of a child of six:

“Here, little boy, you look so sad, I am very sorry for you. Take my flowers.”

What angel-spirit, prompted by the will of its Divine Master, was it that whispered to the little child to go comfort the sorrowing boy, and with her kind sympathy and sweet offering to draw him back from the dreadful precipice on which he stood, and lift him from darkness and despair? His mother's, perchance. A bright light shone in the boy's eye. His face was losing its despairing expression. The flowers were speaking to his heart, whispering of Trust, Faith, Hope! Yes, he must live on, brave all sorrows, trample down difficulties, and with God's blessing try to live to be a good and useful man.

“Why, Minnie! What *do* you mean? Why did you give those beautiful flowers to that strange boy? I never saw such a child as you are!”

“Mamma, I gave them to him because he looked *so* sad, just as if he had not a happy home, or loving papa and mamma like I have. I felt so sorry for him, and I wanted to tell him so. I'm sure he hasn't got any mother, or he would not look so.”

“Never mind, Laura, my dear. Do not worry about Minnie. She is all right. Let her act from the dictates

of her kind, innocent heart," returned the little one's father.

"Oh, yes! Let her alone, and in years to come she will, from the dictates of her kind heart, be giving *herself* away to some motherless, fameless and *moneyless* young man, I fear!" said the worldly and far-seeing mother."

"But not *senseless* man, I'll warrant you," was the laughing reply.

* * * * *

"Why, William, my dear boy, why can you not be satisfied to remain here with me? Why do you wish to go away? 'Idle life!' 'Make a living and do some good!' Humph, sir! you need *not* be idle. Read to me; ride with me. As for your *living*, sir, I made that for you before you were born; and now I intend you shall enjoy it. Now, my boy, my son in all my heart's dearest affections, stay with me. Wait until the old man is gone, then you will have time enough to be useful to others."

"Mr. Lincoln—uncle, father!—yes, more than father—your wish must be mine. Did you not, fifteen years ago, take in a poor, wretched, friendless, homeless boy—bless him with your care and protection, educate, fulfil all his brightest hopes by giving him a profession, which will not only make him independent, but enable him to help and comfort others. Let me prove my gratitude in any way."

"Come, come, do not talk of gratitude. Oh my boy, if you only knew what deep joy it has afforded me, having you here. I will tell you, now, William, why it was I so readily opened my heart and home to the little wanderer I found that Thanksgiving afternoon so long ago. When I first looked into your eyes, there was a strange familiar expression about them, that aroused my interest. Upon questioning you I found that the son of the only woman I had

ever loved, was before me ! My heart yearned to keep you, otherwise I should have relieved you from present want, and then informed your father of your whereabouts. Yes, my boy, the love I bore your mother, was never transferred to another woman. Your father and myself were her suitors, at the same time. He proved the fortunate one. Having you with me all these years has been a great solace ; and now say no more about gratitude. Just love me, and stay with me."

And Uncle Lincoln added humorously :

"Perhaps I may be doing some good by preventing *some harm*. I'll keep you from practicing and experimenting on some poor creature. Oh, you young doctors are always very anxious to make a beginning. 'Pon my word, I have quite forgotten to open my little Minnie's letter. Coming here to see her uncle, and will be with us to-morrow. I'm glad—very glad. Well, it is rather strange that the two I love best in the world should not know each other. It has happened that you have been off at college or attending lectures each time she has been here. Guard well your heart, boy. Every one loves her, and she no one better than her parents and old uncle. Much to her mother's regret, she has refused the finest offers in town. She does not care a mote for the title of 'old maid' with which her mother often threatens her. She is twenty-one and never been in love, she says."

"I think *I* am quite safe, sir. I am not at all susceptible, and it is not likely that a young lady of her position in society and of such beauty, will cast a thought on me."

The next day, the old gentleman had the pleasure of introducing those he loved so well ; and, to his infinite delight, saw his darling Minnie had certainly made a desired impression on his young protégé.

"Here he is, Minnie ! the boy who stole half my heart

away from you. I do not know how you will settle it with him, unless you take his in pay."

Often during the evening Uncle Lincoln noticed Will's gaze lingering on his niece, and there was a softer light than usual in his fine eyes ; but, to his great regret, his boy did not appear to his usual advantage. He was very silent, and his mind seemed absent—far away.

And so it truly was. In the lovely girl before him William Archer beheld the joyous child who, on that dark day, spoke so kindly and saved him from—he dreaded to think what !

Uncle Lincoln rubbed his hand and chuckled merrily to himself. Everything was working to his entire satisfaction. These two impenetrable hearts were growing wonderfully congenial, he thought.

A few days before Minnie's visit was concluded, William brought out and placed in her hands a bunch of withered flowers ; told his story of how, long years ago, her sweet sympathy had cheered his desolate heart and made him feel that there was still love in the world—then so dark to him ; that her kind action had awakened in his almost paralyzed mind better thoughts, and let him know the only way to gain peace and happiness, and, finally, meet his mother, was in living on—putting his trust and having *faith* in God's goodness and mercy !

And then he told his love and gained hers ; and, with her dear hand clasped in his, stood waiting Uncle Lincoln's blessing !

"Minnie might do very much better," said the aspiring mamma ; "but it was Uncle Lincoln's wish."

So the next Thanksgiving was to be the wedding-day."

* * * * *

In a luxuriously-furnished apartment, surrounded by

everything that contributes to make life pleasant, sat an old man.

Every now and then he would raise his bowed head from the clasped hands, gaze anxiously around the room, and then, with a deep sigh, relapse again into his attitude of grief and despair. At last, he speaks:

"Thanksgiving night again, and, for the first time in fifteen years, she has failed to hover round me, and I have not heard the sighing voice enquire: 'Where is my boy? How did you keep your promised word?' Oh! perhaps the mother has found her child. He may be with her now. Oh! I would give *every* thing, my poor, miserable life, to recall that terrible day's injustice. My brave, noble boy! and how were you repaid? Oh! I have suffered terribly for all my neglect and wrong of my motherless boy! All gone from me, all the healthy, beautiful children; all taken away! We were not worthy of those precious gifts. God took them to himself. Now, what comfort do all these riches bring me? Nothing! nothing! and my poor, childless wife! How bitterly she has repented her wrong!"

"Oh! Willie! Willie, my boy! Where are you now?"

"Here, father, here! kneeling, and waiting for your love and blessing."

"Am I dreaming? Oh! cruel dreams! I shall awake, as often before, and find how false you are!"

"No, it's no dream, father! Give me your hand. Now, you feel your erring boy is back beside you, praying your forgiveness for all these years of silence—causing you so much sorrow!"

The old man clasped to his son's bosom, long he held him thus, while a sob of joy burst from the father's thankful heart.

"Father, speak to my wife, you have another child now;

she, it was, who brought me back to you this blessed day. This, the anniversary of my mother's death! also, of the day of my greatest peril, is now the happiest of my life—my wedding-day, and restoration to my father's heart!

“Where is my step-mother? I would see and try to comfort her. Oh! let this day be one of perfect reconciliation. Let us make it a thanksgiving from the inmost heart.”

And now, may we *all*, who have aught of ill dwelling in our hearts, go and be of kindly feeling one towards the other again. Let not the coming Thanksgiving's sun go down on our wrath. Let it not be merely a thanksgiving in words—a day of feasting—but a heart's feasting on peace and good will.

THE TREACHEROUS WIND.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Let it work ;
For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petard.—SHAKESPEARE.

“Look here, Nan, quick, and tell me who this pretty girl is that your devoted Eugene has just bowed to so gallantly. She is coming here, and he is returning with her!” said May Merrill, who stood at the window, watching the departure of her cousin’s *favorite*, of the many admirers who clustered round her. The young lady thus addressed approached just in time to see Eugene Osborn open the gate, and hold it until the young girl passed through. Then following after, walked up the garden beside her, and, ascending the portico, rang the bell. Then raising his hat, he bowed, and retraced his steps. A sneering expression passed over Nannie Carroll’s handsome face, as she answered :

“*Really*, I think Mr. Osborn takes unnecessary trouble to practice his gallantry. But I suppose he wants to keep up his reputation of being the most polite man in L—. You might well imagine that girl almost a princess, if you would judge by his bearing towards her. And she is only my seamstress. Her mother makes Eugene’s shirts, and does his mending. Foolish fellow! that girl is just weak and perhaps vain enough, to be flattered. He should be more careful. Her name you asked? Clara Courtney.”

“Quite an aristocratic name, anyhow,” said May.

"Yes; I believe originally they were in quite good circumstances, but reduced somehow or other. Hush! here she is coming. I will probe her a little, and find out how she takes Eugene's politeness."

Clara Courtney entered, presented her work for inspection, received her pay, and instruction relative to some new articles, and was about retiring, when Miss Carroll asked,

"Is your mother very busy? My cousin needs some work done. I did not know but perhaps she was much engaged with Mr. Osborn's wardrobe, as he is about leaving town. By the by, I did not know you were so intimate with him. I noticed he returned with you to our door."

A crimson flush swept over the face of the sewing girl. For a moment she hesitated; then in a calm, dignified manner she replied:

"My mother is not busy, Miss Carroll. With regard to my intimacy (as you are pleased to term it) with Mr. Osborn, it consists on my part of deep gratitude for his kindness to my mother during her illness last winter;—with him it is only politeness—the result of a gentleman's recognition of a lady, although one occupying a very obscure position in life."

Not a word was spoken between the cousins for a few moments after the departure of the seamstress. The silence was broken by May's saying,

"Well! I declare that girl has the manner and dignity of a princess, surely! Own up, Nan, you are completely nonplused."

"The impertinent piece! I'll pay her for this if I live!" said Miss Carroll angrily.

Nannie Carroll was the belle of L— and a real beauty. She could be very fascinating and winning if she chose; but naturally of a wilful, overbearing, and revengeful disposition,—and woe to any one who gained her displeasure.

Eugene Osborn was handsome, talented, and rich; decidedly the best catch in town. He was not engaged to Nannie, but very much pleased with her; and everybody was quite confident that Nannie Carroll would secure the prize, if she wished to.

Later during the day of the above conversation, Nannie exclaimed:

"Oh, I've a thought now, May, both to have some fun, and at the same time revenge myself on Clara Courtney for her behavior this morning. Do you know that day after to-morrow will be the first of April? You know I am quite expert in the use of my pen. I am going to write a lover letter, as from Eugene, and address it to that proud Miss, telling her how much he loves her, and so on; and that he is only waiting for some token, either by word or manner, to encourage him to hope and speak. I will of course date it April first, and sign only E. O. If she is smart, she will see the date and be cautious. Failing in this, just think what fun it will be to have her smiling favorably upon him, and doing the agreeable generally to the unsuspecting, innocent young man."

"Oh! Nannie, you surely will not do such a real wicked thing. The poor girl has done nothing to merit such treatment. And suppose Eugene should find it out; he would never respect you again, or forgive you either, I think," said May earnestly.

"I *shall* do it. I am not a bit fearful of Eugene's finding it out; and if he should, I can easily bring him to my feet whenever I choose, by a look or smile."

May continued to remonstrate, but all in vain.

The letter was written, enveloped, and directed; and Nannie, taking carefully up the discarded copies, went down stairs to commit them to certain destruction—the kitchen fire. Just as she was about putting them on the

flames, the door was opened by a servant, bearing an exquisite bouquet of rare exotics. She handed it to Nannie, saying :

“ Mr. Osborn’s compliments, Miss.” The treacherous March wind swept through the open door, scattering and bearing off the various slips of paper. Nannie, intent on admiring the beautiful present, forgot for a moment, the little notes ; then suddenly exclaimed :

“ Oh, run, Betty, Jim, and pick up every one of those slips of paper, and put them in this fire ! ”

Some were overtaken and captured—“ *Every* one,” the servant said ; and Nannie, quite easy concerning the concealment of her joke, went up-stairs to show Eugene’s gift.

The next morning found Mr. Osborn wending his way towards Nannie’s home.

Stooping to pluck a few violets and crocuses, he spied among the bushes a slip of paper, the writing on which was certainly his own. He read, and an expression of great amazement settled on his handsome face. Then speaking to himself, he said :

“ What can this mean ? My writing, surely ; but addressed to Miss Courtney. And the few lines here are most certainly a declaration of love. Am I losing my mind ? There is no ending or signature to this ; torn off, I suppose. I never wrote her a line in my life. Of course this is from some one else, whose writing is very like mine. Nothing very remarkable, I suppose. And she probably lost it yesterday.”

So, securing the flowers, he walked on a few steps further, and one more slip caught his eye. This time only two lines were on it :

“ Let me know, by some token or look, that you are not indifferent towards one who loves you.

Signed,

“ E. O.”

"April 1st. I have a clue now. An April joke to be played on that poor girl. By whom? Nannie? Oh, never! Yet I've often heard her boast of how perfectly she could imitate any writing.

"Yes, this is a copy. Ah, Nannie Carroll, your own hand shall decide my future course."

Reaching his destination, he was, as ever, cordially received by Nannie, his invitation accepted, and after an hour's lingering, Mr. Osborn withdrew, to return in the evening.

Reaching his home, he set himself to work studying amply his own heart. Could he give up the girl he loved? Perhaps she was innocent, after all, of this cruel joke. Even if guilty, could he not forgive it? He had quite likely made her jealous by his yesterday's attentions to Miss Courtney. If so, then it was her love for him that had caused her to act thus. *Surely* then he might forgive.

Picking up the New York morning paper, his eye caught a brief notice of the failure of the bank of B—, in which he had a few thousand dollars deposited. A thought quick and decisive entered his mind.

He too would have his April joke, and this should test Nannie Carroll's heart.

A few moments more found him at his accustomed place of resort, with several friends, at lunch time.

Very sad and quiet his manner. Many were the inquiries of his friends.

"What on earth is the matter with you, Osborn? You seem dreadfully depressed."

Then drawing forth the paper, Eugene pointed to the notice, and without a word more hastened away. His manner told them all he would have them believe.

Like wildfire it flew. Before night it was generally

known that Eugene Osborn was ruined. Every dollar gone with the failure of the bank.

It did not reach Nannie's ears that night, and very kind and lovable she was. Drawing Eugene further on, until—yes, he truly drew her with him to the door, after bidding May good-night, and whispered “Nannie, your kindness bids me hope that you are not indifferent towards me. Can you love me?”

“I will ask myself, Eugene, to-night, and answer you to-morrow;” and smiling sweetly on him, she waved him good-night.

The next morning's papers announced with great regret and sorrow the complete ruin of Mr. Osborn. Nannie Carroll read this, and exclaimed:

“He knew this, of course, last night. Well, well, I am truly sorry; for I do like him rather better than any one else. But now, of course I cannot think of him any longer. If I were wealthy, perhaps I might yield to my heart's pleading. As it is, I must make the most advantageous marriage possible. Papa's worldly goods, divided among five children, will not give me enough to maintain me in such a position as I think I am justly entitled to. So adieu to this little love affair,” said the heartless girl.

Eugene came—was coldly received, and decidedly rejected.

The mercenary nature, the hollow-heartedness of Nannie Carroll was so very apparent, that Eugene Osborn was completely and speedily cured of the love—if love it was—he bore for her.

That evening found him at the cottage of the Widow Courtney. She was alone. There was deep sympathy in her manner towards him. An occasional tear would dim her eye. He knew full well she too had heard the news.

A little while after his arrival, Clara came in from a

walk. Her manner, usually so perfectly easy, was shy and embarrassed. She blushed deeply as he pressed her hand. "Yes, no doubt," he said, "she received that cruel note; and what am I to believe? really loves me?"

Eugene was impulsive always, and already his decision was formed; and taking leave of Mrs. Courtney, he arose to go, saying:

"Miss Clara, can I speak with you for a few moments?"

Hesitating, faltering, she followed him to the next room. Then he asked if she had received a note from him. Of course she had. And Eugene Osborn soon learned that he had really won the heart of a true, noble girl.

"But Clara, since that letter was written, you have surely learned of my different circumstances. Then I could offer you wealth, position, as well as a true heart. Now the world looks on me as a ruined man. Do you think of this?"

The wealth of his love was all the true girl wished or cared for, and another hour found them asking Mrs. Courtney's blessing on their engagement.

Nannie Carroll was much chagrined to find that Eugene did not pine away after her refusal, but seemed to be very happy in the society of Clara Courtney. Whispers were afloat that Mr. Osborn's affairs were not quite so dreadful, his losses very much exaggerated, and Nannie began to think she had been a little too hasty in her decision. Clara Courtney was kept in ignorance for ever concerning the writer of the April note. And she did not know until after the quiet little wedding in the church, and Eugene descending from the carriage in front of an elegant brown stone dwelling in one of the most fashionable streets, escorted his wife up the broad steps and welcomed her to her home, that she had won the wealthiest young man in town. Then Nannie Carroll knew what she had lost. A grand recep-

tion was given by the happy couple. An invitation was sent to Nannie, in which was enclosed a little slip of paper, on which was written :

“March winds are treacherous, April clouds very deceiving, but through whose darkness we may be able to find the clear sky beyond.”

Nannie felt sure her April joke had not only been found out, but found too its reward.

She is still unmarried, and still looking out for the most advantageous union.

STEALING THE WRONG CHILD.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

He caught—
No matter what; it was not what he sought.—BYRON.

“MADAM, I *can* and *will* not stand this any longer. Every time I’ve returned home at an unexpected hour, I’ve found some one of your new admirers. I’ve determined to put a stop to this in some way,” said Henry Rider, in a voice quivering with excitement.

He had just approached his home in time to see his beautiful young wife waving a smiling adieu to a gentleman, a stranger to himself.

“Indeed, Mr. Rider, and how do you propose to stop it. It is a pretty state of slavery truly, that because a woman is married she cannot receive the friendly visit of a gentleman, or be admired by one.”

“I shall find a way to end it, madam. I don’t wish to prevent your receiving an occasional visit, or being admired by *gentlemen*; but when such an object, I cannot say gentleman, as that Warren, comes here so often, it is about time for me to take some notice of it.”

“Very well, Mr. Rider, you can notice it in what manner you choose, but for the expression that he is no gentleman, I must refer you to Mr. Warren himself—feeling quite sure you will find out that he is a *man*, at any rate,” returned Mrs. Rider, and she walked very calmly out of the room.

Going up to the nursery, she sent Katy with an order to

the cook to serve dinner for Mr. Rider, who was waiting, and to say that she should not be in, she was going out to walk with little Harry; and away she went to her mother's.

"What is it, Mary? I see you are worried about something. Have you and William been quarreling?"

"Not much quarreling on my side, mamma. But Will is so terribly jealous and suspicious of every one. He came home an hour ago, and found Mr. Warren just leaving. Will has found him at the house several times lately, and I have wished so much he would come in the parlor, and let me introduce him. But no; he generally pokes his head in the door, looking like a thunder cloud, and passes on. This afternoon the pent-up wrath burst forth. And I am determined I'm not going to stay with him, and be constantly watched and suspected."

"Mary, I think you are too hasty! You know very well how jealous William was as a lover. From the husband you must expect the same unhappy trait of character. Try to adapt yourself to it as best you can. William is much older than you, and I have noticed he is sensitive on that subject. You are very lively, and still attract much admiration, so I do not wonder at his being a little jealous lately, for Mr. Warren has been so often at the house. You better go home, child, explain the cause of Mr. Warren's visits, relieve your husband's mind, and be happier yourself."

"Not a bit of it, mamma! It would only be temporary relief; I will give Will a good lesson. This has been going on ever since I've known him, growing daily worse. He should have more confidence in me! And just to think of his being jealous of one old enough to be my father. No, if I humor him this time, very soon it will be about some one else. I am determined to make him feel this conduct. If I have mercy on him *now*, 'twill prove cruelty in the

future. Indeed, it is too bad, when he knows so well I married him in preference to half-a-dozen others. Why cannot men be reasonable." And poor Mary, no longer able to control her feelings, dropped her head in her mother's lap and had a good cry. Her mother replied :

"There is no reason ever in jealousy, my child. I hope your actions may prove all for the best, but I feel rather uneasy about your leaving your husband's house," said her mother.

"Not returned yet!" anxiously inquired William Rider, on returning home about ten o'clock that evening.

"No, sir; but Katy came back with the wagon and got the madam's trunk and some things of little Harry's. She left this note for you," answered the cook.

William hastily tore open the envelope and read :

"You have no confidence in me, nor any respect for my feelings. I have borne with your suspicions quite long enough, and have now determined to return to my mother. Having failed to make you happy, no doubt you will be relieved by my absence.

MARY.

"Gone! and Harry too! How dare she take my child with her? I'll go directly and bring her back. Perhaps I was a little too hasty, I'll go and tell her so,"—and the sorely distracted husband paced the room in a state of great excitement.

"No, I will not go—I will see how long she will hold out. I can bear it as long as she can, I think. It is only a fit of temper, and she will get over it in a day or so," and William Rider resigned himself to his solitude. The next morning he keenly missed his usual frolic with little Harry, but consoling himself with the thought that Mary would probably come home (with her mother, to make peace,) during the day, he ate his breakfast, and proceeded to his business.

But that day, and several more passed, still Mary came not. He was growing very tired of his lonely house, and very anxious now as to the termination of the unfortunate difficulty. At length he came to the determination to send a carriage, with a note bidding her come home; so he wrote;

“Mary, you have had ample time to get over your bad feeling, and return to your usual good sense. Come home with the bearer of this, and we will both forget and forgive the past. Tell Harry papa has missed him very much. Yours, as ever, WILLIAM.”

So making up his mind to be very kind and forgiving, he waited and watched, going from window to window, listening for the sound of the returning carriage. At last hearing it, he rushed to the hall door, ready with open arms, to receive his returned treasures. There he was met by the driver, who bowing politely, reported that “The lady was very much engaged, and that there was no answer necessary to the note.” Mortified, surprised and disappointed, that his conciliating actions had met with such a response, William Rider returned to his library. All the gentle, kind feelings turned to rage and bitterness, with no one to vent it on—not even that consolation for him. Oh, if he had only some one to relieve himself upon. No one was near, except Betty, the cook, and the past few days had taught him that the preservation of self comfort demanded that he should be careful with regard to *some* women’s feelings, his cook’s in particular.

A bright idea struck him. He would get his boy back home, and that would not only comfort his loneliness, but be a revenge on his ungrateful wife, and in the end get her back again. This he could do very quietly, without any one

hearing of the unpleasant occurrence between them. He would watch his chance and catch the child while out at play, and bear him off home. He felt quite sure that he could easily get possession of him by going to law, proving desertion, and so on. But William Rider had a perfect horror of everybody knowing his business; so he watched his chance.

Fortune favored him truly in this idea, he thought; for one evening near dark he was reconnoitering around his mother-in-law's house, when he spied a little fellow playing on the door-steps with no nurse near. How well he knew that little suit of clothes! Bitterly he thought of his wife's neglect in allowing her child to be out without some one to take care of him: but it was all the better for his purpose. Quickly stepping up, catching and covering the child with his large cloak, he sprang into the carriage waiting and drove off exultingly. No one was near to see or stop him. His first thought was to take the boy home, but on maturer consideration he determined for a little while to place him under the care of a worthy woman formerly a housekeeper in his father's family, and one very much attached to himself. It was quite dark when he reached the place of his destination. Knocking at the door, which was answered by the woman, he placed the child in her arms, saying;

"Rachel, take good care of my little boy for a few days. Keep him in; it is necessary that no one should know his whereabouts. I will tell you more when I see you again—I am in great haste now." And slipping a purse in her hand went home.

How he congratulated himself on his success! thinking, "Now, my spirited little wife, I shall hear from you very soon." But the night wore on and passed; morning came, and still no tidings for the anxious husband.

"She has lost all the feelings of a mother, surely," he said.

About noon he was in his office, puzzling his brain over the quiet state of affairs, when he was surprised by a visit from an officer of the law, who politely requested him to proceed immediately to the office of a Police Magistrate to answer the charge of abducting a child! And this was to be the end of all his private and quiet manner of settling affairs! He never dreamed his wife would attempt such means with him. She had lost all feelings of delicacy and respect both for herself and him. But it was of no use spending any thought about it now; he must act; and stepping into a carriage with the officer, soon reached the office of Squire Allright, a gentleman with whom he had long been acquainted. He greeted Mr. Rider very kindly, and saying:

“There must be some mistake here, sir, which I presume you can very easily settle. This woman has gotten out a warrant against you for abducting and keeping her grand-child, I believe you say he is, my good woman,” said the Squire, turning to a bright, intelligent negro woman sitting near him.

“Yes, Massa Judge, my grand-son,” said the woman courtesying politely.

Mr. Rider looked at the woman, then at the Squire, again towards the woman, took out his handkerchief, wiped his brow and looked the picture of perfect amazement!

“Mr. Rider, will you please answer to this charge?” asked Squire Allright.

“Excuse me, your honor, but really my eyes must surely fail me! Is that woman white or colored? who is she?”

“Aunty, you can answer Mr. Rider,” said the Squire.

“I is colored, sir, and my name is Charity White. I is cook to your mother-in-law, Mrs. Armstead,” answered the woman, “and ’scuse me, sir, but you ducted (as his honor calls it) my grand-son last night.”

“It is a lie, woman, a miserable, malignant lie.”

"Order, order, Mr. Rider," said the Squire.

"Mr. Rider, did you carry off any child from the premises of Mrs. Armstead last night?"

"I must admit I did, sir, but one I had a perfect right to, my own son, and none other," answered Mr. Rider, wiping the perspiration from his brow.

"What say you to this, my good woman?"

"'Taint so, your honor."

"Mr. Rider, we will have to insist that the child be produced here. Will you be kind enough to give this officer the address, that he may bring the boy here?"

"Certainly, sir, and after you have seen the boy you will have no further doubt as to whose child he is, and I shall try to find some redress for this miserable affair," said Mr. Rider angrily.

"Please, massa, wrap up de chile warm, and put something ober his head and face, kase its mighty raw and windy out, and he is got de hooping cough," said the woman.

Mr. Rider scowled angrily upon her, and the squire asked,

"Where is the child's mother, my good woman?"

"In Heaben, I hope, massa, and dare was nebber a better gal. No one eber cast a word of 'proach agin her cept dat gembleman dare. I spect if you could see my son Bob, den you'd side rite soon bout whose chile dat boy (de officer going to bring) is," answered the woman.

In a short time the officer returned, bearing in his arms the child, well bundled up.

Mr. Rider advanced, caught the boy in his arms, and pulling off the various wraps and unveiling his face, displayed a fine looking bright *negro boy*!

A murmur of suppressed mirth sounded through the room, and even the worthy squire had to disguise his burst of laughter by a violent fit of coughing. Charity chuckled merrily, shaking her fat sides and looking very triumphant.

Silence was at length restored, and the squire looked from William Rider to the child, trying to gain sufficient composure to proceed, when Charity asked :

“ Please, massa judge, can you side now if that child ’longs to Mr. Rider or *me* ? Tinks he looks much like his daddy what claims him ? ”

Another murmur of suppressed mirth, and the squire, with a desperate attempt to compose himself again, exclaimed :

“ Order ! order ! Mr. Rider, you see your mistake ? My good woman, take your child and go home.”

“ He-he-he ! who wants de *dress* now ? ’Spect it will fit me better den Mr. Rider ! ” chuckled Charity.

“ A word with you, aunty,” said Squire Allright.

And he spoke for a few moments, in an undertone, to her.

“ Sartin Massa, all rite. I is gwyin to keep quiet. I knowed how it was de suit of his son’s clothes, and de dark what ’ceived him,” said Charity.

And she made her way out of the office.

“ Mr. Rider, I deeply regret this mortifying mistake, for your sake. But you may rest assured that it will not be heard of out of this office. The only witnesses are our officers, and you may rely on their silence. If you will walk into my private room I may be able to offer you some assistance in the matter,” said Squire Allright.

William Rider gladly accepted of the friendly aid in the desperate state of his affairs then, and proceeded to give his friend a true statement of the difficulty.

The squire listened attentively, and, at the conclusion, said :

“ Mr. Rider, I think the best thing to be done is to get some mutual friend to go and see Mrs. Rider, and I know of no one better calculated for this purpose than your lawyer, Mr. Noble. He is a man of great ability, discretion,

and very kind heart. Seek his advice and assistance, and I think he will succeed in bringing to a happy conclusion this unhappy affair."

"I will, sir. Your advice is good. I will go immediately," and Mr. Rider bidding his friend good-bye, was soon in the office of Mr. Noble.

"How are you, Mr. Rider! You are just the man I wish to see. I was just about starting with my friend Warren to see Mrs. Rider," said Mr. Noble on the entry of the perplexed Rider.

"Oh yes," the poor fellow thought—"Mr. Noble knows already about this miserable affair. I suppose she has been to consult him."

"Why what is the matter, man? What are you looking so miserable about? Has good fortune turned your brain? Why don't you speak to Warren? You are a lucky fellow, truly! What say you, Warren? Don't know Mr. Rider! Not the pleasure of his acquaintance, why how is this? Mr. Rider, allow me to present Mr. Warren, who has at last succeeded in bringing to a fortunate conclusion the long standing suit of 'Armstead versus Cheatem.' Quite a feather in *his cap*, and impossible to imagine how much gold in *your pocket*. I begin to divine now: This has been a pleasant surprise Mrs. Rider has been preparing for you—that is why you are not acquainted with Warren—Why Mr. Rider, your wife is assuredly the wealthiest woman in our city!" said Mr. Noble, cordially shaking his friend's hand.

All was plain now. The scales had fallen from William Rider's eyes. What a fool he had been! Yes, this accounted for Warren's frequent visits. Oh! what a day of mortification, and how would it end?

Asking for a few words in private with Mr. Noble, the sorely tried man told his story, and asked the lawyer's advice.

"Take courage, my friend, we will soon have all things right. I am just going round to get Mrs. Rider's signature to some papers, and it is necessary to have your's also before the final completion of the business; so come round with us!"

"I must first go and explain in some manner my miserable conduct to Mr. Warren," said William Rider, and acting on the impulse he proceeded up to that gentleman, offered his hand and said:

"Can you forgive my rudeness, Mr. Warren? I am deeply mortified, but it all arises from a very unfortunate trait in my composition."

"Certainly, sir, with pleasure. I can fully sympathize, not exactly with you, but your wife—having to walk very circumspectly myself—Mrs. Warren having but one fault, and that the same as yours. So I can fully appreciate the present state of domestic affairs," said Mr. Warren, warmly shaking Mr. Rider's hand.

"*Can* you forgive me, Mary?" inquired her husband, presenting himself before her an hour later. "I cannot appear more ridiculous in your eyes than my own. But you can very well afford to be magnanimous, for I have had a very mortifying lesson."

"Willingly, freely, fully, William, with but one proviso—that is, that in the *future* you will have more confidence in your wife, and a truer, higher appreciation of *your own* worth," said Mary, earnestly.

"Oh, but when a man of my very ordinary personal attractions and unfortunate temper sees his wife surrounded by handsome men, it makes him feel very uneasy, and you should have some pity on him."

"William, if you would consider for a moment that your wife and *most* other women look beyond a mere handsome exterior for something more, something higher—a true,

honest heart, to risk their happiness with—I think you would be fully relieved from all doubts.”

“Yes, my children,” said Mrs. Armstead, coming forward, “be assured that, without perfect trust and full confidence in each other, you cannot secure true happiness.”

In years after, William Rider could not for a moment regret the clouds that hovered over his early married life, for their darkness had only served to enable him to appreciate more truly the clear sky beyond—the brightness of which is so easily secured, in the wedded life, by all reasonable *men* and *women*.

ONLY A FLIRTATION.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"'T'hy thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathomed depths of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy,
By the perfection of thine art,
Which passed for human, thine own heart,
I call upon thee and compel
Thyself to me thy proper hell."

"HAVE I *ever*, my dear Neta, since your father, on his dying bed, placed your hand in mine and bade 'me be a mother to his orphan child,' denied you *one* wish? Do you know, that had I not some good reason for my objection to your receiving Mr. Asquith's attentions, I would not thus urge you to decline his invitation for to-morrow evening?"

"Auntie, *how* can I do it now? I have already promised, and must go. Only see what I have done in my carelessness. Upset your work-box, and scattered every thing on the floor. Never mind, I'll have them back all right in a few moments," exclaimed Neta, and she began gathering up the various articles and placing them in the box.

While thus engaged, her eyes fell on a small miniature case, which she took up, saying:

"I may open and look, Auntie?"

"Yes, dear, and when you have examined that face, tell me what you think of it."

Neta, opening the case, gazed long and earnestly on the features painted there. Well she might. It was so bright, beautiful and bewildering, that one looking upon it, could

not fail to be fascinated, spell bound. Long she continued to gaze—at length with a shudder she closed the case and said :

“Here, Auntie, take it, I never want to see it again. She is very beautiful—but I have a feeling of horror as I look at her. It seems like a fearful dream. Where have I seen that girl? O! now I know. It is the striking resemblance to Lucian Asquith, that makes her seem so familiar. She must be his sister.”

“No, not his sister, but a very near relative. I was sure you would recognize the remarkable likeness. And now I have something to tell you relative to the original of that picture, which you should have known ere this, certainly before Mr. Asquith’s attentions became so marked.”

“Why Auntie, not more so than Will. Marron’s, and yet you do not seem to be anxious concerning him. Indeed, I think you really dislike Lucian for some imaginary cause for which I think he is quite undeserving,” said Neta, petulantly.

There was silence for a few moments, and then, Neta going up, put her arms around her aunt, saying :

“Do not be worried with me, Aunty, I did not mean to be cross, I will not go, if you think it best. I can send a note of regrets, and so on. Now, please Aunty, tell me ‘the story.’”

“I will, dear, but first tell me, do you like him *very* much?”

“Like him very much? why *certainly*, who could help it? I like to have him (the one bright particular star of our circle) devoting himself so completely to me. The very fact of his preference, is quite sufficient to make a belle of any girl forthwith. This is only a *flirtation*, a little fun, and quite harmless to both, ‘we are *diamond* cut diamond.’”

A suppressed groan escaped from the listener, and she said :

“Oh, my child! Once before have those very same words fallen on my ear, by one very dear to you. Ah yes! As gay and thoughtless of all future consequences as you. ‘Only a flirtation, real fun and perfectly harmless’ were the words. But oh, the terrible future!” and a visible shudder passed over Neta’s gentle monitor.

“Oh! Aunt, you terrify me! Why do you attach so much importance to my thoughtless words?” asked Neta: deeply impressed by her aunt’s words and manner.

“I shall probably never have a better opportunity, my dear child, of opening your eyes and bid you see and feel your only fault. This I must do, before answering your questions, by unfolding the past. Neta, you have a warm pure heart, but oh! darling, in it dwells a bitter enemy to all hopes of happiness—the Pride of Conquest! the Knowledge of Power over the hearts of many. Yes, dear, as harsh as this may sound, ’tis true. You win the love, never thinking how deeply you may afterwards wound.”

“Has it never occurred to you, that the bright, pure lustre of a woman’s fair fame became dimmed by having her name frequently associated with various admirers? Do you not think a high-minded noble man would sooner win for his own a flower whose loveliness was hidden from the public eye? It may please the pride of a man to be able to secure a prize from the many. But I think that his confidence, respect, appreciation and devotion, is bestowed on the woman that he is conscious of having first taught to love; whose eyes have gazed lovingly into his only; whose dear hand has been warmly clasped in his alone.

“The woman who smiles on the many, yet to each conveying by mystic signs the false idea, that he is the favored

one; who allows her hand, which should be kept a sacred offering for pure true love, to be held by countless poor deluded mortals, must look forward to future distrust in the mind of the man who may claim her as his wife!"

Her aunt paused. A deep flush of mortification dyed Neta's fair face as she said:

"Oh Aunty, you are very cruel! Am I such a woman?"

"Ask yourself, my child! It distresses me much to speak thus to you. But I have confidence in your power to conquer, and rise above these errors. And now my love, I must beg of you to withdraw yourself from Mr. Asquith's influence. I would sooner array you in your burial robes, than deck you for the bride of Lucian Asquith."

"I promised your father never to reveal to you the manner of your mother's death; unless I should deem it necessary for your own good, and now the time has come.

"You can have no remembrance of her, for you were less than a year old when she died.

"We were friends from childhood—Cora Manners, (your mother), Lucille Lascelle, and I—living in the same street, pupils of the same infant school, afterwards boarders in the same seminary, and, finally, entering society together.

"Of faultless beauty both of form and feature was Lucille, but of an imperious, jealous disposition.

"Your mother's gentle, modest loveliness soon, however, conquered the heart that had been proof against all Lucille's fascinating power. Lieut. Dayton (your father) was at that time the target at which all the fair maidens directed their sly shots, and all the mammas their most *deliberate* ones. But all of no avail. He wooed and won Cora's pure heart.

"During the engagement, which was kept very quiet, Lucille continued her attempts to conquer; and so far he

yielded to her wiles that rumor whispered she was *sure* of him if she wished. I saw all this; and fearing for Cora's happiness, I ventured to speak, warning him of the possible result of his fatally wounding Cora's sensitive nature.

"Just at that time she entered the room, and he arose; and, drawing her down beside him, said:

" 'My little daisy, have you for a moment doubted me? Listen, love, and be forever assured that, even were you to cast me off, I would never be more to Lucille than now. I have no confidence in her; I could never love her. She is just the girl for the ball-room, and it is real fun to bear her off to the dance, triumphing over the many poor wretches who are fawning around her. I could not take her to my heart, or find a home where she dwelt. This has been *only a flirtation*, and perfectly harmless to both.'

"A few weeks after this, he received orders to sail for a three years' voyage. He pleaded for an immediate union; but Cora's father would not listen for a moment.

" 'She was only seventeen; and they must wait until his return,' the old gentleman said.

"Every moment of spare time he devoted to his betrothed, and seldom met Lucille. Cora was now happy in the blessed assurance that she 'was all the world to him;' and so they parted.

"In less than two months after this, Lucille married a Mr. Andrews—an old man, of immense wealth.

"The parents of Lucille were in very moderate circumstances, and it was a hard struggle to meet her frequent demands for elegant apparel.

"She went to Europe. I married, and went to my husband's home in the city of L——. Thus we were all separated.

"Frequently I had letters from Cora, and occasionally one from Lucille. She was the reigning queen of beauty

and fashion, among the Americans in Paris. But I could plainly see she was not happy.

"She never alluded to your mother, save in the last letter I had from her.

"In that, she said that she had seen in a paper, received from home, of the arrival of the 'Arcadia' from the Indies, and in the list of officers, Lieutenant Dayton's name. That now she supposed Cora would soon be married. She should not send her congratulations, for she hoped to be home in time to tender them herself.

"Very soon after this came a loving, joyous letter from Cora, entreating me to come to her wedding.

"This was impossible for me to do.

"My husband was ill. Always of a very delicate constitution, consumption found but slight resistance. I was soon a widow!

"I cannot dwell on that time of trial and sorrow.

"Cora and her husband, on their return from the wedding tour, came to visit me in my home then so desolate. I love to think of her, as I saw her then; as she stood before me, encircled by her husband's arm, and saying:

"'I am so happy, Ada! Nothing is wanting, except to see your old smile; your sorrow is my only cloud.'

"A year passed on, and then came a letter from her, which gave me great uneasiness. A chilling fear crept over me: I could not throw it off. Here is the letter; read it for yourself."

Neta held this time-worn messenger from her mother's aching heart, long before her—her eyes were blinded with tears. At length she read:

"ADA—Dearest friend, come again amongst us. There is nothing now to keep you. Come to your home—to me. I have a little girl scarce two months old—a blessed boon

from Heaven. When this little bud, this promise of greater happiness, first came to me, I used to wonder how I had merited such joy—such a happy lot. But, Ada, with all this, there is a cloud—oh! so dark and threatening! For the sake of our long friendship, our loving intimacy, come!

“Lucille is here at her home, a widow.

“Yours in love and sorrow, CORA DAYTON.”

“I immediately divined the cause of her trouble. There was really nothing to prevent my return to my former home. My parents had often urged it, so I had to comply. In ten days after the receipt of that sad letter I was sitting beside Cora, with your little form clasped to my bosom. She tried to be bright and cheerful, but I saw what a struggle it was.

“Your father came in, kissed her as tenderly and loving as ever, saying to me:

“‘Ada, I hope you will brighten my little wife up. She seems very nervous and low-spirited. She has not been strong since the arrival of this little love;’ and he caught you up, and seemed very proud and fond of you.

“After he went out, I asked:

“‘What is it, Cora?’

“Her lips quivered, as she answered:

“‘You will see for yourself;’ and I *did*.

“Later in the afternoon Lucille, presuming on her former intimacy, came, unushered, into Cora’s room. With her was her son, a remarkably handsome child of about three years, very like his mother. Far more beautiful than I had ever seen her was she, clad in her deep mourning robes. Thus we met again: I, stricken and bowed with sorrow; she, triumphing in wealth and freedom.

“She lavished her sweet words and caresses on Cora and the baby—remained several hours, and then started up, saying:

“‘Oh! it is quite dark; I had no idea it was so late; and I am such a miserable coward. Cora, I shall have to beg your husband’s attendance home.’

“Then, smiling and bidding adieu, she left with her little one, and of course your father went with her.

“The door closed on them, and Cora said:

“‘Thus it is, almost every evening, some pretext or another bringing her here, or calling him to her. I know my husband loves me, but greatly fear her influence over him.’

“One evening Lucille sent for your father to attend her to the opera.

“‘*Must* you go?’ asked Cora, in pleading tones. ‘I feel so sad to-night. *Do* stay home.’

“He turned; gazed at her long and earnestly; noticing, I think, for the first time, her wan, pale face, and said, gently:

“‘I think I must, love. Ada will stay with you. I have promised her, but I am getting tired of this ‘old flirtation.’ he said, nodding to me, ‘and I shall end it right away. Do not worry, Cora, love: be sure you have no serious cause;’ and kissing her and his babe, he left us.

“‘He is *true* to you, Cora. She has bewitched him somewhat, but I truly think he is tired of it,’ I said.

“‘Oh, Ada!—I really fear her, she looks at me so wild, and with a frightful expression, sometimes; but then it is gone so quickly, and she looks at me so loving, I almost think I must be mistaken,’ Cora answered.

“‘Tell your husband all your fears: tell him, too, that this intimacy is giving rise to reports prejudicial to both. I think he will see the propriety of an immediate change.’

“She did, that night, after his return, and when I went into her room, the next morning, I was amazed to see how bright and cheerful and happy she looked. She was singing to you. Throwing her arms around me, she said:

“‘You were right, Ada; he is true to me, and is so sorry he has grieved me so much. See, he has written this note to her, and told me I might show it to you; it would relieve you, as well as reassure me.’

“The note was to this effect: That it had come to his knowledge, recently, that the intimacy, existing between them, was causing remarks prejudicial to her fame. This he considered his duty to endeavor to stop immediately. She would recognize the propriety of his declining to appear with her in public again. His wife had suffered much from his seeming neglect, and in the future he should try to prove to her, and the world, that the vows he plighted at the altar were not *idle* words, and ended by saying he should leave town, in a few days, with his wife, for a Southern tour, hoping to improve her failing health.

“Neta, how can I tell you the awful tragedy of the next few hours!” And Ada Harland’s face foreshadowed the telling of a terrible story.

She grew composed after a little while, and Neta listened, almost breathless, as she proceeded.

“I left my dearest friend to spend a few hours with my parents. Never since that day of horror, have I failed to act according to instinct. Every step I took from my friend I was seemingly drawn back. I never went so reluctantly in my life. I reached home, mother noticed my uneasiness and inquired the cause.

“I could not explain it. I hastened to return. I was then impelled forward as mysteriously as I was before drawn back.

I reached the house, was just entering the door, when a woman, deeply veiled, rushed by, almost throwing me down, and was out of sight before I recovered from my surprise. I went quickly up the stairs; at the first flight I was met by Fido, Cora’s little pet dog. He was whining and barking

piteously. Gazing down at him, I saw, oh, horror! his paws were dripping with blood. How I reached the room I know not. In the same chair as I had left her, beside your cradle, fallen back apparently lifeless, was your mother. My screams brought up the servants. I endeavored to staunch the blood which was flowing from a wound in her breast. A physician and your father were soon found. The former gave us no hope; he shook his head sadly. After a while we noticed she was showing signs of returning consciousness. She murmured your father's name, and tried to lift her arms to him, but they were powerless. He drew near, raised her head and pillowed it on his bosom. She whispered, 'Lucille.' I have never heard such a groan of agony as burst from his lips. She seemed distressed by this. Again she whispered, and we heard the words, 'Love my little one for me.' The kind doctor held you to her. She kissed you many times, and said:

"'Take her, Ada.' She grew weaker rapidly. Smiling sweetly, she murmured something, of which we could only hear the words, 'Follow on.'

"With her eyes lifted and beaming with an unearthly light, she went before us. Lucille was found in the woods, several miles away, a raving maniac. She died a few weeks after in the Lunatic Asylum of W. Your father's terrible grief and remorse wore his life rapidly away. In three years he followed your mother, and left his orphan girl to my love and care. Before his death he told me he had learned that Lucille, after receiving his note, was terribly agitated, and raving wildly, rushed out of her home. Her friends endeavored to follow her, but she eluded them, and they never saw her again until she was found in the woods. Also, that he had found a little dagger, which he had seen Lucille have, lying just outside Cora's room.

"Lucian Asquith is Lucille's son; he was adopted by his father's sister, and bears her name.

“Now, my dear, you know why I so much dread a flirtation, most of all with Lucille’s son.”

Neta was very much agitated by the history of the past. It was some time before she became calm. At length she said:

“Thank Heaven, Aunt, this has gone no further. Lucian has never breathed a word of love to me. I will go away for a visit, return with uncle Harry and my cousins, and so end this acquaintance, which I can well imagine is a source of great anxiety to you. And now, my dear mother’s best friend, I will promise that I will from this time endeavor to conquer these faults, which I am now so sensible may prove fatal to peace and happiness.”

Neta left with her cousins for a tour of pleasure, and during her absence Lucian transferred his attentions to a new beauty; and in a few months after Mrs. Harland had the great pleasure of decking Neta for the bride of her special favorite, Will. Marron.

THE GREAT PARISH SCANDAL.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Always for the want of news they pine—
And if there's anything in which they shine,
'Tis in arranging all their friends' affairs,
Not minding well their own domestic cares."

MOST small towns and villages are noted for the gossiping propensity of their inhabitants; but perhaps no other place enjoyed that reputation to such a degree as the village of Eastville; where the worthy people manifested *their* understanding of the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," by attending to the business and domestic concerns of that or those persons in preference to their own.

Eastville was now busy in considering the merits *pro* and *con.* of their new minister—young Brother Allworth. Yes; at last, they had an unmarried man!

They had sent their delegates to the Convention with the understanding "to accept none but a *young* man," meaning one unencumbered—the real truth being that the mammas wanted a chance towards matrimony for their daughters—for a wedding was a rare occurrence in Eastville; and the worthy dames had come to the conclusion that if they had an unmarried minister with them, that his friends (brothers in the ministry) who should visit him, most likely, would be like himself—a chance for their girls! and so it was *this* time; just the one they wanted came.

"Forewarned is to be forearmed," proved a true saying

in this case. Brother Heartwell gave his young friend a full and true account of his late charge—their weaknesses, and particularly their “ruling passion.”

“Do the very best you can, and it will prove the very worst. Try to please by your hopeful encouraging sermons, and Sister Smith will declare you have entirely too much levity in your manner and discourse. Profit by this, and give them an earnest, appealing and threatening one, and Brother Jones will vow you look as if you were about to sign the death warrant of the whole congregation, and then preach as if there was no salvation for them afterwards.

“Oh! may the good Lord deliver me from such people again! Most likely you will get on with them the first term, but look out for the second; you will not get through. No one ever has. They will be down on you when you least expect it, and about what you will not find out until they choose to tell you!” said the worthy brother.

“Thank you, Brother Heartwell, for the insight you have given me as to the character of my new parishioners, although there appears but poor comfort for me, and little hope that I shall prove a comfort to them, yet I think your account will aid me somewhat in my future course with my charge,” said Mr. Allworth.

He determined not only to govern himself according to circumstances, but likewise to characters. So when with Brother Jones and his cheerful girls, the young minister was perfectly natural, happy and hopeful as these. On the contrary, when visiting Sister Smith, whose daughter Patience, being of no particular age, and imbibing her mother's gloomy disposition, could not, to save her, feel content and happy, particularly since Farmer Hayworth had (despite all her endeavors, and her mother's invitation to partake of endless good things of her production) gone and married one of those gay, worldly Jones girls. With

these folks Brother Allworth was grave and rather quiet, conversing on just such subjects as he thought would please them. When surrounded by all dispositions, where extremes met, he endeavored to maintain a happy medium. Thus suiting all—and so it really happened that during the first term of his ministry with the people of Eastville, they had for the only time, one with whom all were pleased. So the delegates went up to Baltimore to attend the annual conference with orders to get Brother Allworth back for another term, and not to hear for a moment of the coming of any other.

It was in Mrs. Hawke's pretty, comfortable little cottage, that the young minister made his home. One day while this sister was busily engaged giving his apartment a good cleaning against the return of the occupant, Sister Jones chanced to drop in, and finding what her friend was about, ventured to say :

“You'll not have that trouble very much longer, Sister Hawke, I reckon.”

“I'd like to know why not I?” replied Sister Hawke.

“Oh, no offence to you. I'm certain sure that Brother Allworth is mightily pleased with his home, but—well, you know it would be only natural for him to make his home with his wife's relations——”

“Oh, yes! now I know what you mean. Sister Smith was in here a minute ago and she hinted as much herself. Well, Patience is a nice gal, but I should think she was a little too old for our brother—but that's a good fault.”

“Sister Smith! Patience! Marry! Brother Allworth!” gasped Sister Jones, scarcely able to speak for her astonishment.

“Why, what an awful——” and here she stopped short, either from prudential motives, or want of breath. Possibly it flashed through her mind that Sister Hawke was not

a safe person to express her opinion to, concerning the truthfulness of another sister, and she did not care to be called up before the church for accusing one of the members of direct falsehood. So, gaining a little composure, she proceeded:

"Sister Smith may think what she says, but I know that Brother Allworth only goes there as his duty calls him, and he comes to my house on a different business. Every body can see—if they choose to use their eyes—that it's my Sally he's looking after. But time will prove who is right. I hope you won't speak of this to any body!"

Sister Hawke, of course, promised to be very quiet, and gained from her sister the same with regard to what she had told her about Patience Smith, and as a testimony thereof, before night all Eastville were busy considering this important question.

The delegates returned. "Is Brother Allworth coming back?" was the universal inquiry.

"Yes,"—and then the worthy brothers' eyes grew sad, faces long, and shaking their heads in a very ominous manner, said:

"They feared that they had all made a very grave mistake; Brother Allworth was not what he should be."

"But he is all he need be for *us*, and good enough for us," said Sister Hawke.

"Ah, so we all thought. But now—oh dear, dear, what wickedness there is in this world! Who can be true? Listen, while I whisper what I *know*, what my own eyes have witnessed," and Brother Jones whispered in the various sisters' ears the story, but in a voice so low and deep, that we could not catch it, my dear reader, and will have to wait patiently for a while to hear the charge.

A deep groan escaped from the lips of the listeners! And then some one ventured to suggest that there must be some mistake.

"No, it was too true. Brother Jones could and *would* prove it."

"Oh!" groaned forth Sister Smith. "What a deceiving man! How we all loved him! and only think, sister, he has christened our children——"

"Thank heaven, we can have them christened over again!" said Sister Brightthought.

"Buried our dead," resumed Sister Smith.

"That can't be undone," answered another sister.

"Married our daughters——"

"No, *not* quite, although you offered him a good chance and great inducements."

"And you ought to thank him for resisting your attempts," said Sister Hawke, spitefully, and darting an angry look toward both Sister Smith and Brother Jones. She was very fond of the young minister, and held a slight hope (despite all the seeming truth of the charge) that he would prove all things right in the end.

The minister returned, and very soon discovered that something was wrong. Every body looked dark and gloomy. The sun even did not seem to shine as brightly, or the sky so blue as it was. The whole atmosphere was chilled. Merry Sally Jones's ringing laugh was hushed; Patience Smith relaxed into deeper gloom than ever, and his cordial, kind and attentive hostess was quiet, and looked at him so sad, and wore a look of such disappointment whenever he was near her. What could it mean? *He* never was so happy in his life before! Well, well, he must wait for time to tell the trouble, and appear not to notice it, he thought.

Many secret meetings were held—prayers at various sisters' houses, which he was not invited to attend.

"My time has come at last! I might have known that it would come some time. I could not expect so much better luck than all my predecessors. But what on earth have I done to occasion all this change?"

At last the deacons of the church called a public meeting, and requested the presence of the minister. The usual preliminaries gone through with, one of the deacons arose and stated that:

“With the deepest regret they had felt it their duty to request their brother’s presence on that occasion to answer a charge made against him of the gravest character. He trusted that this charge could be met and dealt with in such a manner by their hitherto much respected and beloved brother, that it would not only satisfy the brethren and prove his innocence, but restore their brother to his former high position in their esteem. It had been charged that Brother Allworth was in Baltimore during the meeting of conference, in the company of and occupying the same apartments in Barnum’s Hotel with—” and here the worthy deacon stopped, drew out his handkerchief, wiped his brow and drew a long deep breath, and gasped forth—“A married woman!”

The deacon dropped in his seat.

The minister started to his feet. His face flushed with anger—and in a voice quivering with excitement, he demanded the name of the person, who dared to utter such a charge against him? One so entirely false.

Brother Jones arose and said it was he, and asked:

“If Brother Allworth could persist in denying the charge?”

The minister stopped suddenly then! his hand in his pocket, drew forth *his* handkerchief, covered his face and sank into his chair.

“Convicted! guilty! His manner proves it too truly!” were the whispered comments.

A profound silence ensued for a few moments, during which was heard a groan or so, and then an audible sob from the bosom of some soft-hearted sister, probably Sally Jones or Mrs. Hawke.

The minister arose, removed his handkerchief, and displayed a face on which were unmistakable signs—not of guilty emotion, but suppressed mirth.

“The hardened sinner!” whispered Sister Smith.

“I cannot deny the charge, Brother Jones—it is true,” and here the minister’s face broke forth into a becoming smile. “I shall take the pleasure of introducing that lady to you as soon as possible.”

A distinct groan now issued from some one, and was immediately followed by many more.

“As my wife! Mrs. Allworth!” added the minister.

After the surprise had subsided in a slight degree, and the whisperings in a measure ceased, the minister proceeded to state :

“That he had, as they well knew, gone to his home a few days previous to the meeting of conference, and then and there consummated an engagement of two years’ standing. That his wife accompanied him to Baltimore, and then returned to her home, until the deacons could repair the parsonage, or he could make some arrangements for her reception in the home of one of the kind sisters of the church. That his first answer that the charge was *false* they must excuse—for it was occasioned by his great surprise; and, in truth, he had hardly gotten accustomed to regard himself in the position of a married man, or to remember he had been in company with a married woman.”

Not a word more was spoken by the deacons. What could they say? But one after another came forward, grasped his hand and pressed it warmly. He felt his old position was regained, and they were all glad to have it so. The sisters endeavored to show their regret for their hasty judgment, by every one offering her home for the reception of Mrs. Allworth. Mrs. Hawke was so delighted at his innocence (for “she had nothing to regret, as she never

judged him wrongly" she said) that she actually hugged her favorite, and didn't care if she did—as she was old enough for his mother.

There was a tear in the eye of merry Sally Jones, and a sigh in the heart of Patience Smith, but they both came forward to clasp their minister's hand.

The people of Eastville had that day received a salutary lesson. And it was impressed forcibly on their minds and deeply in their hearts by the next Sabbath's sermon, in which their minister spoke so feelingly of the wrong of hasty judgments, begged them so earnestly to consider well before they spoke aught of ill; to have charity toward one and all; to rather hide than display their neighbors' faults; to believe in their innocence, until their guilt was proven; to judge not by appearances; and above all, it behooved Christians to keep their hearts from evil thinking and their tongues from evil speaking.

This sermon, and the event which called it forth, made a lasting impression and great improvement in the character of the people of Eastville. The last I heard of them, the deacons were considering the propriety of suggesting that there should be a new article added to those requisite for membership in the church—namely, "That of minding one's own business."

The young minister did admire merry Sally Jones, as her mother had thought, and sang her praises so continually to a brother minister, that he induced him to come and know her, which he did, and before many months had passed Eastville rejoiced in a wedding the first time for years so many they could not be remembered. Soon after this happy occurrence there came to visit Brother Allworth, a brother, grave and sorrowful, mourning the loss of a loving wife. 'Twas sad; of course he needed sympathy, and some one to help him mourn. No one could do this more effectually

than Patience Smith, and so she did, and is now hand in hand endeavoring to console and comfort him through the journey of life.

All bless the day which brought Brother Allworth among them ; the mother and daughter particularly. He suited them in every way. Matrimony is still prevalent. A wedding is no longer a nine-days' wonder, and Eastville is fast losing the bad name that had clung to it so long.

LOVE UNTO DEATH.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

“Oh! let me still but breathe the air,
The blessed air, that's breathed by thee;
And e'en if on its wings it bear
Illness or Death 'tis life to me.”

“DOCTOR MANNING, tell me of my dearest friend and school-mate, Dora Austin?” I asked. “You were her physician, adviser and confidant; and I feel sure from no one else could I obtain so full and true a statement of the events which transpired after I left her ten years ago.”

“Yes my dear madam, I can and will. It is no idle curiosity that prompts you to seek this knowledge of one of the purest, truest and most devoted hearts that ever suffered for man. You knew, you loved her. When I think of that dear girl, how deeply I feel the truth of those poetic words :

“Men cannot love as women do.”

“Few of us merit the devotion, the self-sacrificing affection, which is so often lavished on man, by such as Dora Austin,” answered the doctor in a voice quivering with emotion.

The doctor was an old bachelor. A thought flashed through my mind. Was I not probing a hidden wound? Perhaps he had loved her! While I was pondering over the probability of this, he asked :

“When did you see her last?”

“The Winter of 185—. I was with her, at the time of

her engagement to Abner Grayson. I remained until after the arrival of her cousin from Europe," I answered.

"I was absent then, I have often wished to know the particulars of those few months. Tell me, if you please, all that happened during your visit, and then you shall hear her sorrowful story," said the doctor, and rising, he walked to the window for a few moments—I think to conceal and calm his agitation. He returned, seated himself, and motioned me to proceed.

"As I told you before, Dora and I were schoolmates. I accepted the invitation so often urged, to visit her, and there met Abner Grayson. I knew of him, well. She would many times in our school days, tell me how handsome, and talented he was. How kind to her. I knew she loved him; long before she would admit it even to herself. When I would tell her so, she would always answer, 'I love him as if he was my brother, he has ever been as such to me, nothing else. We have grown up together. Our plantations join. Abner is such an ardent admirer of beauty; he could never look on one so very plain looking as I, with any feelings, other than simple friendship.'"

"I had been with Dora about a week; when one afternoon I was sitting reading in a deeply curtained window. I was so absorbed in my book, that I had no knowledge of anyone entering the room, until my attention was attracted by the deep, manly voice of Mr. Grayson, wooing Dora in soft, loving tones.

"My first idea was to let them know of my presence. Then I thought it would be better for me to remain quiet than to interrupt them, at that moment so fraught with fond hopes and bright anticipations.

"Thus it was I became a listener to their betrothal.

"Dora still clung to the idea that he could not love her, because she was not beautiful. She said:

“ ‘Abner, wait until you have seen my cousin before you give your heart to me. You will surely love her better than you possibly can me. Remember how fond you were of her, years ago, in our childhood. She is far more beautiful now. Papa says she is the fairest woman he has ever seen. She is coming home to us. She is an orphan now. Next month she will be here.’ ”

“ Then he answered her :

“ ‘You dear, shy little bird—do not try to fly away, and bid me seek a mate of brighter plumage! Come nestle down beside me, love, and let me try to prove to you how lovely you truly are. I admire the beautiful, Dora, but I *love* the good. *You* are all and everything I would have you: nothing wanting. I would not change one feature, one glance of yours, darling, for the fairest woman on earth. I know your heart, how true and pure it is, and I must woo until I win it. Whisper to me, Dora, that you love me a little.’ ”

“ ‘You *know* I do love you, Abner. Who else have I had to love, since my childhood, but papa and you! You have been playmate, friend and brother.’ ”

“ Excuse me, doctor, but then came forth the selfish, exacting nature of man, in the words :

“ ‘Dora, do not talk of such love to me. ’Tis not as this I would be loved. I would have you

“ Love me not in fancy; love me not in fear;
But love me as if life *doubled* in *thee* when I am near.”

Thus, or not at all, would I be loved.’ ”

“ ‘Abner,’ she answered, ‘if you will tell me this again, after you have seen Lillian, then I will be to you all you wish. Your happiness is dearer to me than my own.’ ”

“ ‘Then you will soon be truly my own. Come, little one, look at yourself in this mirror. Why, truly, you *are* grow-

ing beautiful. Your eyes are beaming brightly; and now your cheeks are like blush roses!’

“He led her from the glass, and out on the piazza; and I escaped to my room.

“Very devoted he continued to be; and Dora really looked so happy that her little plain face became quite pretty.

The next month brought the beautiful Lillian Frost.

Lillian Frost! How wonderfully were her name and nature adapted to each other!—beautifully fair, and cruelly cold.

“How I watched Abner when he first beheld her. But he was not as I feared, dazzled by her great beauty.

“She was not animated, spirited enough for him. She did not seem to care to be attractive then.

“So Abner again wooed my friend, and she wore his betrothal ring.

“Then Lillian began her arts to draw him from her cousin. First, I really think she was only in fun, trying to see if she could make Dora jealous. Afterward she was herself caught, and loved Abner as well as she was capable of loving any one.

“My visit was near its close. A few days before I left, I heard him say:

“‘Why do you not wear your hair like your cousin, Dora? And do wear something light and pretty, like Lillian’s gossamer robes. You dress so very plain. You should try and look brighter, love.’”

“I knew then Dora’s happiness would surely be wrecked! I returned to my home. Every four weeks I would have a letter from her. She tried to conceal her heart from me. But I knew her so well! I knew she was trying to prepare herself for the end! At last she wrote me thus:

“My True Friend.—Do not let the contents of this letter grieve your dear warm heart. Know that I am content, that Abner’s happiness is mine. He has found out that he loved me as a dear friend or sister. Lillian is more than this to him. I saw the mistake before you left me. Indeed before *he* was fully sensible of it.

“He struggled hard to be true to his faith with me. But the attempt was making him miserable. I watched for a good opportunity to make him happy. I had not long to wait.

“I was reclining on the sofa in the music room. It was twilight. Lillian came in, did not notice me, and began one of her passionate love songs, she sings so beautifully.

“Before she had finished Abner was beside her. She turned from the instrument and gave him a look! He was not proof against that.

“He poured forth in eloquent words all his love, and then sank into a chair, saying:

“‘What have I done? what said? Oh! I am wronging Dora terribly!’”

“I advanced then, and said:

“‘May Abner be happy with Lillian! I am content, your happiness is mine. Love *me* as your little sister.’”

“And as I was drawing my ring off to place it on Lillian’s finger, *it broke*,—just as it left my finger. It was very strange. The ring is very heavy, but it was near the setting of the stone that it broke.

“Lillian felt badly about the unpleasant accident, but Abner said:

“‘Put it away, Dora, I will get another.’”

“The next day, Lillian said: ‘Dora, if you really loved Abner, you could not resign him so calmly. It would kill me to give him up!’”

“I replied:

“ ‘Would you *die* for him? When I love, to secure the happiness of the loved one is my first object. And in this I am at peace.’ ”

“I married in a short time after, and heard no more from her.”

“Now, Doctor, you must go on and tell me what I am so anxious to know.”

“Oh, curse him! but for him she might have been mine. Pardon me, madam. I never knew of this. I suspected, but never was certain, of an engagement.

“Dora Austin was the only woman I ever loved, save my mother. I was much older than she—by twenty years. I always feared Abner Grayson was my favored rival. I returned from my travels, and found him on the eve of marriage with Miss Frost. I thought I had mistaken their friendship for love. I placed my heart before Dora.

“In a true womanly manner, she told me that she had loved, and in all probability her heart would never know another love.

“She dismissed her lover, but secured a true, firm friend.

“About the time of the marriage, the yellow-fever was making sad havoc in our section. Very few of the country folks went near the neighboring villages or towns. Abner, so blindly happy and busy in preparation for his approaching nuptials, would go frequently into the town.

“They were married at Dora’s home, and immediately started for a Northern tour.

“Twenty-four hours had only passed, when the terrible news reached us that Abner was ill with the fever, and was in a hospital about thirty miles from us.

“In a few hours more, Lillian was back again with Dora and Mrs. Austin.

“She had fled and left him.

“Then, for the only time in my life, I saw Dora Austin excited—almost maddened.

“‘You have fled—left him to suffer and, perhaps, die with strangers. You, his wife! Where are your vows, girl? Strewn to the winds. Shame! Shame! This is your love! your devotion! *I* will teach you woman’s friendship. I am going to him—to comfort, nurse, and save him, with God’s blessing, and return him to the arms of his devoted wife.’”

“Her father and we all pleaded against this; but it was of no use. She was determined. I tried every way to induce her to give up the idea, but in vain. I offered to go and remain with him. She would not even listen, but proceeded to make all arrangements. I knew she would die if she did not go. Her mother died of heart-disease. She inherited that affection from her. Mr. Austin knew this well; so he yielded. I shall never forget the look of sorrow on the old gentleman’s face when she returned for a second embrace and, throwing her arms around him, gazed long and tenderly in his eyes, and said:

“You dear, good father! It will not be long before we meet again, and be happier than now!”

“‘Come with me,’ she said to me.

“We were soon with the suffering man. The attack had been violent from the first. He was entirely out of his mind—knew no one. He would clasp Dora’s hand and call her his darling Lilly, and insist that she should rest and not worry about him; she must take care of herself and not mar her beauty. Then again he would say, ‘Send for Dora,’ and wonder why she did not come and help his poor wife.

“And so he continued to take her for his wife—lavish on her words of love, and reproaches that Dora would not come to him.

"My heart was wrung terribly to see how this mistake was striking a death-blow to the devoted girl. Her strength was fast giving way. I knew well if she was attacked with the fever in her present exhausted state, it must prove nearly fatal.

"She insisted that I should write her 'will.' You know, in her own right, she was immensely wealthy. Her grandfather left her—his only heir—his all. She was deeply impressed with the belief she should die.

"'Dear friend, if I live, all right. If I die, not setting to right my household, it would be all very wrong,' she said, when I tried to chase these gloomy thoughts from her mind. She left fifty thousand dollars to Abner's first child, and asked to have him or her—whichever it might be—named for her.

"Another large sum she left for the provision of her slaves, and giving them their freedom.

"The remainder she left to erect and support on her estate an asylum or hospital, and to be under my control and direction.

"You must visit this institution. We called it, 'The Austin Hospital.'

"She did not sign her 'will' the day it was written, but said:

"'In three days I shall be twenty-one. I don't think I shall be ill before that time.'

"It was her birth-day. She was sitting beside the sick man. He was sleeping. She turned to me and whispered low:

"'When he awakes, he will be better, and probably know us. He will live; unless a severe shock is given him. Do not let him know she fled. If he asks for her, I will answer him.'

"It was as she said. He opened his eyes; his mind was in the gaze. In a scarcely audible voice he said:

“‘Dora! where is Lilly? Have I been ill?’

“‘Lillian is safe now. She was in some danger at one time. You will see her soon. You have been very ill. Don’t talk any more now.’

“You will see, my dear madam, how she told the *truth* in her answer,—but in words to comfort and *deceive* him. Again he whispered: ‘Dear, good Dora! Heaven bless you! You have suffered for me. You look ill, go lie down.’ He held out his hand—she clasped it and said:

“‘Yes, Abner. I will now, that you are better. I do not feel very well, I’m tired a little. This is my birth-day, Abner. Give your sister a kiss,’ and she bent over and pressed her lips to his. She gave him a look long and earnest, as she did her father, but of deeper love, and left his side.

“She never saw him more.

“She sent for me very soon after, and for two other friends—signed, and had her ‘will’ witnessed. Then she grew rapidly ill.

“Constantly during her illness, she would cry; ‘Do not tell him she fled! Do not let him know it, please.’ And then again: ‘Do not think it was being with him that made me ill! It is not the fever, doctor, it is my heart. You know mamma died so.’

“She became conscious before she passed away, and said to me: ‘My best friend! I have *loved* one better, but *trusted* none as I do you. God bless you! I will watch and pray for your coming to meet me above. Promise me that I shall not be disappointed?’

“The last words she whispered were:

“‘Do not worry about me, Abner! It is my heart, not your sickness—not the fever.’

“Truly so it was her heart’s devotion.

“I have often thought I might have won her if she had

lived. I am endeavoring, by God's mercy, to meet her again. Sometimes I grow weary for the summons. I care not for life. I have lived amongst the most dreaded diseases, wooing death. At times I feel forgotten, neglected, and wonder why I can not go with the many that are called. Then I am comforted. I feel her near me, and saying: 'You must stay—you have your Father's will to do—his work to carry out.'

"Visit the fatherless, and widows in their affliction. Heal the sick. Have pity for the poor. Be merciful after thy power. Freely ye have received, freely give.'

"I know she watches over and waits for me, and I am happy."

"Tell me, Doctor, of him? Did he know his wife fled?"

"Most assuredly he did. She, in her miserable excuses, told him too truly of the devoted love of this noble woman, whose heart he had so trifled with.

"They are not happy. They have not deserved to be. I know that thoughts of Dora are seldom, if ever absent from the mind of either.

"Lillian is ever thinking of the absent one, who saved her husband, by her own sacrifice—and dying tried to shield her from his reproach.

"Abner is constantly brooding over the young life cut short; of the fond, true heart, with whose last pulsation came a thought of peace for him.

"They have no children. This is a great disappointment to both. I think it is well.

"I should be sorry to see a miniature of Lillian, bearing the name of Dora Austin."

The doctor finished, and then I thought:

Truly, there are men, worthy of all a woman's devotion. Had I not one beside me then?

THE HUSBAND'S MISTAKE.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"DID you change those buttons on my vest, Fannie?" asked Edward Barton, after lighting his meerschaum and taking up the paper for his evening.

"Oh! Ned, I am so sorry; but indeed I forgot it. I have had so many things extra to do to-day, and Frankie has been so fretful. But I'll do it just as soon as I put him in his crib, he is almost asleep," answered his wife, her face telling plainly of fatigue and anxious care.

"No, never mind, I'll do it myself—give me a needle! No, never mind, I'll wait until the next holiday, and then I'll do it. I'm in no very particular hurry. But it does seem to me, Fan, if you had a little more system, you would not have to work so hard or be so apt to forget. Here you have everything before you, and nothing to interrupt. Now I never forget my work in the office, and I'm often called off a dozen times a day. I should think it the easiest thing in the world to get on with your little household affairs," returned Ned, knocking the ashes from his pipe out on the pretty, bright table cover.

The patient wife made no reply to these remarks. She had heard the same so often before, and tried to explain how completely a sick baby set to naught any ideas of system; but husbands cannot understand these things, and it is not much use to try to make them. They must have the experience.

Baby Frankie, like most babies, particularly of his sex,

was a little despot, and seemed already to understand that it was man's prerogative to rule. He had then no idea of going to sleep, but worried, kicked, and cried, much to his father's annoyance.

"What is the matter with that child? Why does he not go to sleep?"

"Why Ned, he sees you, and he wants to be walked about. You have used him to it. I am too tired, please you get up and take him; he is getting very heavy for me. You have not spoken a word to him since you came home."

"Well, Fan, I am worried. I wish he would go to sleep. I want to read you a letter from Aunt Patience. Come, give him to me; I'll have him off to dream land in no time."

Now Frankie was in his glory while his papa was jumping and playing with him, and seemed to forget to rub his poor little gums, so swollen and sore. And Ned, enjoying the many little antics, and infant jargon of his first-born, was won for a little while from his unpleasant mood. But soon he tired of the fun, and handing the baby back said:

"Here, take him; he won't go to sleep for me." And Frankie, now farther off than ever from sleep, was put again into his mother's arms.

At length, after rocking and singing, walking, and patting the little form for a long while, the little head dropped on her shoulder, and Frankie was asleep. Weary and almost breathless, Fanny sank into her seat and said:

"Now Ned, dear, what is it? Perhaps I can help you in your trouble!"

"I hope you are not sick, Fannie! What is the matter? You do not look just right."

"Oh no, not sick; only a little tired. Frankie is a good deal heavier than he used to be. I shall soon be rested."

"Oh! is that all! I'm glad of it. It would be very un-

fortunate for you to get sick just now. I want you to go see aunty for me. I'll read the letter, then explain.

"DEAR NEPHEW.—Just as soon as you receive this I want you to get a day's leave from your office and come to see me. As life is very uncertain, and delays are dangerous, I think every sensible person ought to set their affairs all right. There are several letters I want written, and my business needs a general fixing up. But, most particularly, I want to have you come and go with me to put Tom Dawson out from off the lower farm. I am determined to make him give up possession immediately. He has taken no notice of the money letter you wrote him. I do not wish to go to law with him, for 'them that has the least to do with law are the best off.' *Be sure* you come Thursday. I will have a dinner you like. *Don't* disappoint me.

"Your loving aunt,

"PATIENCE KETCHUM."

"There now! Isn't that provoking? I would sooner give fifty dollars (if I had it) than go—yet I dare not make the old lady angry. You see Fan., I never sent my letter to Tom. Poor fellow, he has had so much to pull him back this season, *I* was not going to worry him. He told me his own house would be ready for him in the spring, and then he would go. But Aunt Patience thinks she can get more rent for it; so will not hear of his remaining. Now if I go, she will carry me there to get him out. Then there, I will be in a petty scrape. Was there *ever* a man so beset with other people's trouble, as I?

"You go, Fannie dear, and tell that penurious, hard-hearted old—oh! excuse me—that economical, praiseworthy, aged relative of mine, that we are dreadfully busy at the office; but just as soon as I can get a day (for which I'll

not ask in a hurry) I'll come. You can write her letters, eat her nice dinners, and I'll stay home, mind the house and take care of Frankie."

"But Ned——"

"Wait a moment, Fan. If you will smooth things up for her, and not let her think hard of me, I'll buy you a sewing machine before the month's out."

"Of course I'll go, Ned, if you wish, and do the best I can for aunty and you too. Never mind about the sewing machine, we cannot afford that just yet. You know I sent the cook away because I want to economise. I can go very well to-morrow. I did up all the work to-day. You will have but little to do, and Dick can attend to almost everything, if you make him understand just what you want. He is a bright little darkey, and will amuse Frankie while you read. What time do the cars leave?"

"Not until fifteen minutes of eight. You will leave at half-past seven."

"Come, Ned, hurry up and dress. Breakfast is ready, and I have not a moment to lose. I washed and dressed Frankie and he is asleep again, and will remain so for an hour or two, if you will keep the room quiet. Now listen! Let me tell you just what to do, and how to get on. I have fixed ham, pie, cake, jelly, and pickles on the side-board ready for you, and placed napkins and so on in case any one should drop in, and you should want to give them lunch. Now, after you have done your breakfast, please take out the rolls I've just put in the oven, and then put in the loaf of bread; it is not quite light enough now. You can remember that, can't you, my dear?"

"Mrs. Barton; please to call to mind, that I am a man, not a child, and think I have mind and memory enough to serve me so far as the baking of a loaf of bread."

"Now, Ned, don't get cross; make Dick wash up the breakfast things, keep up the two fires, sweep up the kitchen, and that is *all*. I will run up stairs and make the bed. Good-bye, Ned, do be careful of the baby, and mind, don't forget the bread," and she tripped off, then darting back, said:

"Oh, Ned, I forgot to tell you, I put out some tea in a cup, and some coffee in another; so you can make which you choose. Keep some hot for me. Good-bye."

Frankie was sleeping sweetly, when Edwin Barton returned to his room, after finishing his breakfast and providing for Dick, with the direction to clear up, as Mrs. Barton said.

Looking around the room, he spied a picture that was not in the exact position, and providing himself with a hammer, he withdrew the hook, selected the proper place to hang it, and went to work.

This unusual noise awoke Frankie, who very soon set forth a loud wail of fright and complaint. In vain the father tried to soothe the little one; at length, Dick's services were called into play.

"'Deed, Mister Barton, I 'spects you make racket and scared him. I'se ain't dun de dishes yit," answered Dick.

"Never mind, sir. I suppose there are more clean dishes if they are wanted. You come here and try to quiet the baby."

But Frankie would scream, in spite of all Dick's endeavors. At last he struck a bright idea.

"If you let me go in next door and git Harry Blame (Blain) to cum in wid his'n playthings, dat will muse him."

So little Harry came, and Frankie yielded to his influence and became quite pleasant.

Ned read his paper, lighted his meerschaum, and finally

found a pair of scissors and began his long-threatened piece of work, (in truth, amusement), namely, cutting and twisting lamplighters. The waste pieces of paper he threw on the carpet, which were directly caught up by the little ones, and contributed much to their amusement, and future discomfort, both to Frankie and his father. But I must not anticipate.

Noon came, and Harry bade adieu, and in a short time the baby began again to grow quite restless, and continued to grow worse.

Ned took him up, and to do him justice, I must say endeavored in every way to amuse him.

"Dick, what is the matter with him now? Is he hungry?"

"No, 'deed, sir. I'se fed him. 'Spect he misses his mammy. 'Spect may be how you don't hole him easy."

So it seemed, for as the father pressed the little one in his arms, louder grew his screams.

So passed the time, with little intermission, until late in the afternoon.

"I mus' go to de door, sir,—the bell dun rung," said Dick.

"Don't you let any one in. I am out, you hear, boy?"

In a few moments Dick called up:

"Gemman say how you will see him, an' I tole him how you say you was out too——"

"Ned, it is only I. Let me come up?"

"Tom Merryman! Oh, all right! Come up, perhaps you can help me here. Do you know anything about baby-tending? This youngster has a spell of—well, I do not know what!"

And Ned proceeded to explain how it was he was home in Fannie's place.

"Yes, I can help you, I think. Bless you, boy, it is

'wind,' that is the matter with him. I know all about it. When sister Jennie's baby cries, that is what they all say is the matter, and of course it is so with yours. They give it a little drop or so of gin, and let me see, how old is your baby—yes, fifteen months. Well, fifteen drops of paregoric, that is it."

"You are sure, Tom, that it will not *hurt* him?" asked the anxious young father.

"I *know* it will not."

So it was duly administered, and it soon proved a happy idea, for Frankie's little eyelids grew heavy, and before many minutes passed he was sound asleep.

"Tom, you are the smartest fellow I know! Come now—let us go down and get something to eat. I am almost famished. Luckily, Fannie fixed everything for lunch, except coffee, and I can make that. I understand it, much better than tending babies."

"Hal-loo! What the thunder is this? Look, Tom!"

Tom went to inspect.

"It looks like batter, or dough, making an exit from the pan——"

Ned's face wore a most comical expression as he answered.

"You have hit it, Tom, sure! It's all dough now! Fannie left that loaf for me to bake. What can I do with it? Whew! How sour it smells. Can you help me out here, Tom?"

"Yes—I guess so. Help you up with it from the floor and out with it, to the slop-pail. That is the way our cook does when she burns the bread up, and I think that might answer for this."

At the concluding part of this speech Ned sprang to the stove, pulled open the oven door, and drew out the pan of rolls, now burnt to coal.

"I forgot all about them, I had so much to do. A fellow

cannot remember *every* thing. I wish that scamp Dick had forgotten to fill up this stove with coal; then they would not have been *quite* so black. Any idea what to do *here*, Tom?"

"Oh, certainly. Let them keep company with the loaf."

"All right. I'll make the coffee now, and then we be ready for our lunch. There are a few rolls left from breakfast."

Tom carried out his plan relative to the lost bread, and the coffee being ready, they proceeded to the dining-room, where Ned put out the various good things.

"I say, Tom,—what will we say became of the bread?"

"Never mind, old fellow; I'll stay and help you out."

"Tom, you are the only comfort I've had this day. What is the matter now? What are you making a face at?"

"Do you call this coffee!"

Ned tasted.

"Something is wrong here, certainly. Well, never mind, we will drink milk. I say, Tom," said his friend, after looking very serious for a few moments, "you know what I think?"

"I can guess—namely, housekeeping is not your vocation."

"Well, yes—but more than that."

"That woman is an institution?"

"Yes, that is it. A divine institution. I never knew it before. This day's experience has forced the knowledge on me. I appreciate the whole sex—my wife in particular. If *to-day*, when almost every thing was done for me, I could not remember, and get along, how must it have been *yesterday* with her. Sweeping, dusting, brewing, baking, mending, making, and more than *any*, and most of all, tending baby at the beginning, ending, and between every other duty. Why man! we should go mad, with so much care. Oh, woman! From this hour I am thy devoted admirer."

"You are right, Ned. I appreciate them too; particularly after eating such cake and pie as this. *I'll* give up the idea of being a bachelor," said the *merry man*.

"Bless me! It is half-past six o'clock. Fannie will be here very soon. I *wish* those dishes had been washed up; then every thing would have *seemed* right anyhow."

"We can do them in no time," said Tom.

"Too late—here she is," answered Ned. And Fannie came in; looking as bright and happy as possible.

"Why, how well you look. I was fearful you would be tired, Fannie! Sit down, and let me remove your wrappings."

"Oh, no—not a bit tired. I am glad to see you, Mr. Merryman. You have kept Ned from being lonesome, I know. I have had a very pleasant day. How is Frankie?" returned the little wife.

"I wish *I* had," thought Ned—but answered: "I'm very glad to hear it. Frankie is sleeping nicely."

"Give me a cup of tea, please, and a roll. The long ride has given me an appetite."

A look of consternation, mingled with an appealing one, was cast towards Tom, by the anxious husband. He poured out a cup, still quite hot, and passed it over.

Fannie sweetened and tasted. Puckered up her mouth, tasted again. Her eyes were dancing, her mouth drawn down, every feature expressing suppressed mirth.

"Tea or coffee? Did you say, Ned?" she quietly asked.

"I am really sorry, Fannie. But I must have put both in, I guess. I was very much worried about that time."

"Never mind, I'll make a cup in a few minutes," answered his wife. And off she flew to the kitchen to meet the breakfast things, just as she had left them. She soon returned with her tea; sat down and asked:

"Where are the fresh rolls, Ned? I'd like one of your baking."

"Now Mrs. Barton, I am very much afraid you will think we were gormandizers, but those rolls were so *very brown*, and inviting, that we *made away* with all of them," said the ever ready Tom.

"Oh! I am *very* glad you liked them. I would just as soon have the loaf—a piece, if you please, Ned?"

Another appealing glance towards his friend, who came to his assistance.

"Really, I do not know what you *will* think—but my dear madam, we were both of us pretty nearly famished and seeing the loaf which was so *very light* and *tempting*, why—we paid our *respects* to that first," said Tom, very gravely.

"Indeed, I am delighted you enjoyed both," said Fannie—but at the same time, *thinking* there was some mystery concerning it.

"I will go up and see Frankie, relieve Dick, and then come down and tell you all about my visit," said Fannie.

She was gone about a half hour, during which time the two friends were congratulating themselves on their happy exit from their embarrassing situation.

Fannie returned, looking merrier than ever, and said:

"Ned, you have had a very trying day with the baby—but, poor little dear, no wonder he fretted. Dick has told me all about it. Your prescription did very well to soothe him to sleep, Mr. Merryman. But you did not get at the right cause of the trouble. Although I've no doubt he proved to you there was *wind* enough—but in his *lungs* only. Just think, I found the bosom of his dress stuffed quite full of scraps of stiff paper, which had irritated his skin considerably. That was the reason he cried so, when you pressed him to you. The sharp edges of the paper hurt him, but it is nothing serious."

"It was that little scamp, Harry Blame (as Dick calls

him.) Of course I could not have my eyes on him and my work too," said Ned, in a rather apologetic manner.

"I know it, dear. Now I will tell you about my trip. Aunty was very much disappointed at not seeing you—"

"I hope you made it all right, Fan. What did you tell her?"

"I *did*—but I told her the truth, the *whole* truth, and nothing but the truth," answered his wife.

"No—you did not dare to! Told her I was home?"

"Yes. Now listen, my husband, and please not to say another word until I get through. I knew aunt better than you. I was straightforward with her. I began by telling her you sent me, because you did not wish to hurt her in any way. I told her of the hard trial this winter had been for the poor—that every one felt it; then of the trouble in Tom Dawson's family—how much sickness, and so on; and then I told her you had never sent those letters to him. In short, I fixed everything all right—wrote her letters, fixed up her affairs generally, and most of all, found the key to her heart. And only think, went over with her to see Tom, and she was as kind as could be! She told him to take his own time to pay her, and stay as long as he wished. And now, to finish up, I told her what you had promised me if I did all right——"

"Why, Fannie, I——"

"Not a word yet. See here! She gave me this!—one hundred dollars—to buy the machine, saying she would have *that* pleasure herself, she was so thankful I had helped her to find her *better* feelings, which she had hid away so long."

"Fannie, you are the dearest, wisest, best wife in the world! How *did* you manage the old lady?"

"Ned, dear, as every true woman likes to be managed by her friends, relatives, more than all, her husband. Deal with us gently, patiently, lovingly, *candidly* and truthfully,

without reserve or concealment, and you have found the key to unlock our hearts: secure and keep the real treasure within."

"Fannie, I believe *that* is the *right* policy for us, truly; and I have come to the conclusion that a woman has the *right*, and is *worthy*, to fill the highest positions," said Ned, warmly.

"Well, dear, I am very glad you think so; and I think my sisterhood generally would like very much the privilege of trying the experiment; and, at no very distant time, I think it will be granted us. From our husbands, however, *now*, we wish and claim, to be loved, respected and *appreciated*."

The inauspicious day ended so happily to the delighted man that he humorously told the story of the rolls and loaf, that evening, to his wife; and to his friends many an evening after.

AUNT PRUDENCE SAID SO.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

One not easily jealous, but being wrought,
Perplexed in the extreme.—SHAKESPEARE.

As happy and loving a little wife as ever blessed the heart and home of man was Ruth Spencer. A gentle, brown-eyed little dove, who believed all the world as good and as kind as herself.

She had been married five years, and during that time hardly a shadow of care or trouble had entered her little home, except what had been brought by her husband's old aunt Prudence, a maiden lady, very poor and terribly proud, who lived with them.

One little cherub of a boy was the crowning blessing of her life. She would often say she was the happiest woman in the world, with the best husband and sweetest baby.

In the next house lived a very pretty girl to whom Aunt Prudence took a manifest dislike; and indeed she was the cause of many a heart ache to our little Ruth.

Rumor said Lilly Hanson was engaged to a man old enough to be her grandfather—an arrangement of the old folks. Lilly did not love any one particularly, and as the old Colonel was immensely wealthy, she did not object to their arrangement.

A great intimacy sprung up between this young girl and Ruth, and when the latter's brother, a Lieutenant Seaton, came to make his sister a visit on his return from sea,

scarcely a day passed without some party of pleasure, or sight-seeing expedition, found them together.

It was soon very evident that Lilly's bright eyes had made a decided impression on the young officer.

In a confidential talk with his sister, he told her as much, but concluded by saying :

"But it is a hopeless case. She is truly betrothed to that 'Old Colonel.' It is too bad ! he is old enough to be her grandfather ; but he is a noble old chap, and I cannot help liking him."

"Would he not release her, think you, if she loved some one else better ?" suggested his sister.

"No, I think not. It seems her father is under some very great obligation to him, and I am by no means sure that she does love any one better than her old Colonel."

So the visit was concluded, and young Seaton bade adieu without giving his sister any hope that Lilly looked on him with any feelings other than simply friendship.

But to Ruth's amazement, very soon her husband began to grow very fond of Lilly's company. If they were going to any place of amusement, he would be almost sure to say :

"You had better ask Lilly to go. Her old lover does not take her out much, and she will not go with young gentlemen."

Aunt Prudence did not hesitate to express herself very freely. On one occasion she said :

"Indeed, Ruth, child, I do not know what you are thinking about, not to see that girl is trying her best to bewitch your husband. It's plain as day to them as are not blind, or don't want to see. And I think she is as artful a piece as I ever came across, having the impudence to tell you how good your husband is, and what a splendid fellow—humph, as if you didn't know it. I'd let them know my eyes were open. I'd not be treated so."

"Why, Aunty? treated how? George is devoted to me, and just as attentive as he ever was. George is sorry for her, and she makes so much of him, indeed of both of us, that of course he cannot help being kind to her. Nothing else; but I do think he is a *little* too fond of her," murmured Ruth.

"Is Mr. Spencer in? Sister wants to see him, and says please will he stop at our door a moment before he goes to his store," exclaimed little Willie Hanson, running into Ruth's sitting-room.

This put a stop to Aunt Prudence's lecture for that time. Indeed, Ruth was very glad to have a stop put to it. She had become sore on the subject. Poor little thing, she tried hard not to see or think anything wrong, but her pretty face had a decidedly careworn look.

A few days after this conversation, Lilly herself came bounding into the room and said:

"Mrs. Spencer, isn't it most time your husband was home? I want to see him so much; I watched for him this morning, he must have passed before I was at the window—" and then, as if her speech needed an apology, she said:

"I want to see if he has a letter for me, he promised to call at the office."

There was a step in the hall, and away she flew to meet him, and had a low talk of a few moments before George came into the room, and then passed out, but not before Ruth heard her say, "Thank you, I'll have it ready and watch for you."

Very quiet was the poor grieved little wife.

All that George could do to be pleasant, did not make the dinner other than a very dismal meal; and, when taking his leave, he went as usual to kiss her, she did not return it, but ran up stairs to hide her tears from Aunt Prudence.

That evening, when her husband came home, she did not try to wear a happy face, she was miserable, and was not going to try to hide it any longer.

"Ruth, darling, what is the matter? What ails you? I've never, in the five years of our married life, seen your sweet face wear a frown or any expression but love and happiness, until within the last few days. Tell your husband what troubles you," he said, taking her in his arms.

She burst into tears, and told him all; and what Aunt Prudence thought and said.

"Little wife, do not let your pure heart be troubled by what Aunt Prudence says, and above all do not see your friend's actions with her eyes. Trust your husband, and be very sure that he loves his little Ruth more and more every day, and thanks God for giving him such a blessing," he said, in such a solemn, truthful manner, that she was quite satisfied for some time afterwards, notwithstanding that Aunt Prudence, every day or so, would find something to shock her ideas of "common decency" as she termed it.

"Papa is coming! Papa is coming!" said baby George, running up to his mother.

"He tops to see Lilly, papa dive Lilly likeness."

"Do you understand, Ruth, what the child is saying? Well, things are coming to a pretty pass, that a man stops to see young girls, and give them his likeness, keeping his poor wife home waiting dinner; 'twasn't so in my day, but of course, it is all right, simply friendship and pity."

"Aunt Prudence, please do not talk so. I have full confidence in my husband; and cannot you throw the mantle of charity over Lilly's actions?"

"Humph, I don't know what style of mantle charity wears; but it will take a monstrous large and long one, different from the present fashion, to cover up and hide that girl's bold and wicked ways," broke forth the old lady.

So days passed into weeks and there grew to be a coolness between Ruth and Lilly, the latter trying her best to warm the chilled heart of her former friend; and when she would throw off the feeling of suspicion, and be a little cheerful and easy, Aunt Prudence would suggest some new outrage to society in general, and domestic peace in particular.

At last it came just as she knew it would be, just as she had predicted.

One day a note from George was brought by the porter from the store, saying "that his wife must not be uneasy or worried, he was called away very unexpectedly, and had not time to come home to say good-bye, as he wanted to catch the four o'clock train. He would be home the next afternoon.

This explanation was satisfactory to Ruth, not so to Aunt Prudence.

"Humph! may be so! I hope it will prove true. I believe that girl is at the foot of it."

Ruth had just put her baby to sleep, and was sitting by his crib, when a loud ring was heard at the hall door; in a few moments more Mrs. Hanson rushed wildly into the room, crying out:

"Where is Lilly? is she here? When did you see her last?"

Ruth was too terrified to speak.

"Where is your husband," demanded the excited mother.

Poor child! all was plain now—George gone, Lilly gone.

"I've not seen Lilly to-day; my husband left town this afternoon," she gasped forth.

A new actor now appeared in the scene—Aunt Prudence.

"Just what I've been expecting to hear for a month past. Where have your eyes been, madam, that you have

not seen your Lilly's designs on that poor unsuspecting child's husband? I've been seeing it all and telling her; but she is so good and pure in herself, she could not think of a woman's being anything else. Hold up your head, my dear—you have nothing to be ashamed of. There is no disgrace at your door. If he is gone, I'd feel it—a good riddance of bad baggage."

"Oh, oh, aunty! you don't know—you have never been a wife. I was so happy before we got rich and came here. Oh, oh!" sobbed the poor wife.

The almost crazed mother ran from the room, glad to get out of the way of the enraged spinster.

Ruth spent the night in walking the floor, crying. At last, near morning, she grew rather more calm. She had decided what to do.

Packing up a trunk with things she needed most for herself and little one, she went, at early dawn, to Aunt Prudence's room, knocked, and said:

"I am going home to my parents. I shall leave this morning at eight o'clock. I cannot stay here—I should die. You had better remain until you hear from him; and, please, have my things—my wardrobe—sent to me. You will know how to settle up better than I. I must go to my mother."

"Well, my poor dove, I will do the best I can, and will come to see you when I get through."

In a few hours, the cars were bearing her rapidly away from her husband's home.

"Hoity-toity! what is this?—a visit from my little Ruthy. Why did you not let us know you were coming, that some one might have met you?" inquired old Mr. Seaton.

After much trouble, he was able to make out, through

the sobs and broken exclamations of mortification and grief, just how matters stood.

“Well, well, yesterday your brother took it into his head to clear out from us and get married, without a word; and to-day, our daughter takes it into *her* head to come back to her home, tired of matrimony.”

“Come, child, stop crying; there must be some mistake—George seemed to be a very devoted husband.”

“Oh, so he was, until (as Aunt Prudence says) that girl bewitched him.”

“Humph! ah, I should not wonder if that misnamed damsel had not ‘lighted and been blowing the fire all the time,’—in a word, been the cause of this trouble.”

“Oh no, father dear, it was plain enough for every one to see, and they both left in the same train. O, I shall die—I know I shall.”

Ruth was carried off, put to bed, and given a composing draught by her mother.

The next morning she was calmer, and her father managed to get a clearer statement of the affair.

“Now tell me the name of the young person you say he has gone with.”

“Lilly Hanson,” whispered Ruth.

“Lilly? Why, bless my soul, the Lillies have grown to be very forward flowers! That is the name of the girl Jo. has gone off with—Lilly somebody—he did not say who; only we must welcome his Lilly—and here they are now!”

A carriage drove up to the door; and Jo. jumped out and led in a lady, saying:

“Here, father,—mother,—is your new daughter!”

The lady raised her veil, and disclosed the bright, pretty face of Lilly Hanson.

“Why, Ruth, you here? George just left us yesterday afternoon.”

But Ruth was speechless, gazing with amazement on the face of her new sister.

The old gentleman seemed to be the clearest-headed one of the group, and said:

"Oh, I see—this is the Lilly!—ha! ha! ha! they did not let you into the secret."

By this time, Lilly's arms were around Ruth—she exclaiming:

"Do you forgive me, sister? I fear I've caused you much suffering; but it was all Joe's fault. He said if I made you the confidant, that Aunt Prudence would draw it all out of you, and ma would surely know it; and as you would tell your husband, we had better do that ourselves, and have but one in the secret. He brought me all Joe's letters and sent mine, and finally went over to Baltimore, and having seen me duly married, hastened back to you. Oh, how disappointed he will be not to find you. Do you forgive me?"

"Forgive you? Will George ever forgive me for not having confidence in him? He told me to trust him. Oh! indeed George will never forgive me," cried the poor child.

"Yes he will," and turning round she was clasped in her husband's arms.

"Indeed, little wife, you have been sorely tried, but in future you will not borrow Aunt Prudence's eyes, I hope. However, it's all right now."

"'All's well that ends well,'" said old Mr. Seaton.

"This ends very well," said George.

"I've good news for you, Lilly. I went in and gave your marriage certificate to your mother, and she was so relieved that the silly report of Auntie's was not true, she almost hugged me. And now for the grand finale. Your old Colonel says Joe must bring you home. That he never had the slightest idea of marrying you himself. That he only want-

ed to keep off the young scamps until you were sought by some fellow. He had picked out Joe for the lucky chap; but you would not let him have the pleasure of giving you away. He says all he has is yours, with his best regards, and hearty thanks to Joe for relieving him—for he is perfectly devoted to bachelor life.”

THE THREE BELLES.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Three ladies on the summit of your mind
Their station take to hold discourse of love :
Genius and courtesy adorn the one,
Beauty and graceful elegance the other ;
The third hath lands, and slaves to do her honor.—DANTE.

“WHAT a restless, uneasy little body our Doctor’s wife is, Grandma! Was she always thus? Or is it the reverse of fortune that has affected her mind and manner? I often wonder how such an elegant man could have chosen one so seemingly inferior to himself in all mental attainments. She is rather handsome, certainly, and possibly in her youth may have been beautiful enough to win the Doctor’s heart; but not to hold it, I fancy. She is not happy. One thing I particularly notice, that whenever she speaks she glances anxiously at her husband, as if she was fearful of saying something to displease him. You knew her before her marriage, did you not? Tell me of her youthful days, and his,” asked little Katie May.

“Why, Katie, what an observant little body you are! And you are very nearly right in your ideas of poor Mrs. Daw. Yes, I knew them both, and their parents before them. I will tell you what it was that won the Doctor’s heart, and all about it.

“In this county, within a distance of not more than ten miles, lived three young girls, all possessing considerable beauty, and, strange to say, all bearing the same given name of Rebecca. There were but few young men in the neigh-

borhood, and those here were very commonplace, either in manner, appearance, or ability, excepting one, young Doctor Harry Daw. Handsome, talented, and very agreeable, he made sad havoc with the hearts of all the girls, particularly with the three Rebeccas.

“I remember well being present on one occasion and hearing a conversation between the Doctor and his mother—my dearest friend—on this subject.

“The Doctor was sitting deep in thought that day, when his mother asked :

“‘What is it, Harry, that you are puzzling your brain over? A new medical theory? an obstinate case of fever? or the most becoming color for a neck-tie?’ she added, laughingly.

“‘Neither, mother dear. Something of deeper importance than all your surmises—something more for the heart’s than the brain’s decision. I will tell you—first, however, stipulating that our friend Mrs. May shall either close her ears *here*, or her *lips for ever hereafter*, and giving me her promise to think as charitably as possible of my seeming high opinion of my own merit. Will you agree to my terms?’ he asked, bowing gracefully before me.

“I promised, and have strictly kept it up to this time. But now it can do no harm, after all these years have passed by, to relate it to you.

“‘Mother,’ he said, ‘these three Rebeccas—I am perfectly bewildered by them : to which shall I yield? Sweet, gentle, loving little Rebecca Berry—beautiful as a poet’s dream, Nature’s masterpiece, I heard her often called—is stealing deeper and deeper into my heart. It was with the greatest difficulty last night that I could restrain myself from placing my heart and hand before her, and asking her to bless me with her love. Yes, yes, I know she will prove

a great blessing to whoever may win her. But, mother, she has neither social position nor wealth. I, too, being poor, would not be wise to make her mine; we both should do better.

“ ‘Next comes pretty, brilliant, gifted Rebecca Greenough. How she charms me with her constant flow of beautiful language, her never-failing wit! How proud I should be with her presiding over my home. She would grace the highest position. I feel sure that great fame will yet be hers. The wealth of her mind will be known far and wide. But she is too poor in worldly goods. Oh, if I only had wealth! Well, well, it would not be quite so hard to decide.

“ ‘Last, but by no means the least in attractions, is Rebecca Eaton — pretty, amiable, of one of the oldest and proudest families of our State, and undoubtedly the greatest heiress! Think of her broad lands, numberless slaves, and countless hoard of gold! Does not all these gifts of fortune insure happiness for its possessor? One thing weighs only against her. She has not had the advantages of education that her position and wealth demand; or if she has had, she has not made proper use of them. She has not the attainments of an ordinary girl of twelve years but she is quite young enough yet to improve herself. Now, mother dear, if I could be so fortunate as to win either, with which should I most likely secure peace and happiness?’

“ ‘Oh, Harry, my boy, you are weighing between love, pride, and wealth; and I greatly fear the claims of the heart’s purest affections will be found the lightest in the balance. Yes, you have said truly, it is for the heart’s—yours only—decision. Consider well; and if you have the knowledge of having gained a dearer position than that of friend in the heart of either of these young girls, let that

knowledge weigh heavy in the favor of *that* one, whichever she may be,' answered his mother.

"I bade them adieu and left, soon after; feeling quite sure in my own mind that Harry Daw would have no difficulty in winning either of the three he wished, all loving sufficiently to risk their happiness in his keeping. My own heart hoped little Rebecca Berry might be the favored one, for I thought she loved him best, and the loss of his love would be harder for her gentle heart to bear.

"A few weeks after this, his decision was known. An engagement between the Doctor and the wealthy Rebecca Eaton was proclaimed. Yes, gold weighed the heaviest, and won the Doctor's hand; I wish I could add, his heart.

"Report said that, for a few hours only after this, Rebecca Greenough hid herself away, for a severe struggle with her loving, womanly heart. But bravely she conquered, and bore her disappointment; coming forth as calm as ever—more charming, if possible. She made a visit to Rebecca Berry, it was said, to sympathize with and comfort her, and, with her arms around her friend, she whispered that she too had loved young Doctor Daw, saying:

"'Cheer up, little one! for if there is any truth in the saying, "Misery loves company," you have that consolation. Harry Daw suffers with you. You feel, and I know, that you alone he loves. He has bartered his heart's purest impulses for gold, and such a man is not worthy of our love. We will show him and the world that there are women whose hearts will not break, or their owners fade away and die, all for the loss of a man's love.'

"There began then, and continued until they left this neighborhood, a great intimacy between these two. I was present at the wedding, and saw the many friends come forward to congratulate the wedded pair. Among them was

Rebecca Greenough. Smiling and graceful she came, and with her clear bright eye gazing calmly in his, she offered her wishes for his happiness. I think, after that day, the Doctor's mind was more than doubtful if he had ever been regarded with a deeper feeling than friendship by her.

"Close following her was little Rebecca Berry. Naturally timid and retiring, her *manner* on that occasion did not excite comment or attention; but 'How beautiful!' 'How exquisitely lovely!' were the numerous exclamations. Silently and with drooping eyelids she stood before him, and placing for a moment her cold fingers in his, she passed on. Oh! I know there was a severe pang in the heart then, which, had it yielded to its own pleadings before it was too late, had clasped for ever in his own the little trembling hand he had just relinquished.

"Frequently, at the wedding parties, I have seen the Doctor held spell-bound, entranced by Rebecca Greenough's brilliant conversation. Yes, for hours I've watched him lingering beside her. Once I remember being very near, when she stopped suddenly in something she was saying, and waving her fan gracefully in the direction of the young bride, said, 'Doctor, Mrs. Daw is alone. Your presence is due there.'

"From the servants came reports of how diligently the young wife betook herself to studying her grammar and dictionary; of long days spent in trying to improve herself, to please her husband.

"One day, about a year after their marriage, my mother gave a dinner party. They were present. I was seated just opposite them at the table. Some one of the guests addressing Mrs. Daw, she replied with some pleasant little remark, but the words were not well chosen, or some one of them miscalled, I forget just which, but it fell unpleasantly

on her husband's keen ear. A flush of mortification mounted his handsome brow, and a little while after, when we were leaving the table, I heard him whisper the harsh, unkind words, 'For Heaven's sake, talk as little as possible, and save me such public mortification.'

"So you see, Katie, you were quite correct in your surmises. Her anxious looks are caused by the fear of displeasing or mortifying her husband.

"A few months after this, there came into the neighborhood, to drink of our 'health-giving waters,' a young man, handsome and very wealthy. He met the beautiful Rebecca Berry; saw how very different she was from the butterflies of art and fashion that he was accustomed to meet in his city home, and became very much in love with her, prolonging his stay among us until he won and carried her away with him. We have constantly heard of her occupying a high position among the *élite* of New York; and now, although twenty years have gone by, 'tis said she is still one of the most beautiful women of the time.

"Rebecca Greenough left her home, to visit her relatives in a far Western city. There her talents were soon well known and appreciated. She became a contributor to a widely circulated literary paper, her productions meeting every where the highest favor; her society universally sought; and in the most refined and brilliant circles she was the 'bright particular star.' About a year after she left us, she gave her hand to a rising young lawyer: his own ability, accompanied by the great popularity of his wife, bringing him before the people; occupying, one after another, positions of honor and importance, until now he comes as the Senator from ———.

"So you see, Katie, the loss of Doctor Daw's love proved, in the end, a great gain for the two girls. Poor man! his

life has truly been a great failure, the wealth he so coveted bringing him neither happiness nor advancement in any way. And now, the result of the war and the Emancipation proclamation have reduced them almost to poverty. I truly pity *her*. But, although I like the Doctor very much, I cannot refrain from often thinking and saying, 'The end has brought him just what he deserves—disappointment!'"

A few weeks after this, Katie May, on her return from church, rushed into her grandmother's room, exclaiming:

"Oh, Grandma, you ought to have been to church to-day! Only think! there I saw, all standing together, the three Rebeccas! I had an opportunity of getting a good look at them, while Jim fixed the harness—some part of which, luckily for me, just then was broken.

"Grandma, you will go call on your old friends, will you not, and take me with you? I heard they were going to remain some days, visiting their relatives."

"Indeed, I truly felt sorry for poor Mrs. Daw, and the Doctor too, when I remembered that all these years he has been reaping his reward: and to-day I think the measure was filled to overflowing, when he stood in the presence of those two women—one so perfectly charming, as she came forward leaning on her distinguished husband's arm, and greeted her old friends so cordially! How proud any man might well be to call her his wife! She is decidedly the most elegant woman I ever saw. You can readily see her gifted mind beaming in every glance of her glorious eyes."

"Well, Katie, how does my little favorite, the beautiful Rebecca, look?" asked her grandma.

"As peaceful and happy as possible. What must she have been in her girlhood? I have been continually thinking since I saw her; for now, although nearly forty years old, she is far more beautiful than any girl I ever saw! Ah, Grandma, there is not a shadow of a regret for the past in

either of their bosoms, I know ; and the Doctor knew and felt it too."

"Yes, my child, I think poor Dr. Daw has found that *riches* taketh unto themselves wings, and flee : while the *wealth* of the *mind* is much more reliable, and the treasure of a pure loving heart *endureth for ever*."

DAYS OF TRIAL.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

Things deemed unlikely, e'en impossible,
Experience often shows us to be true.—SHAKESPEARE.

DURING the summer of 1865, I was *en route* to make my accustomed visit North. When we arrived in Baltimore, our car was entered by quite a large and rather merry wedding party.

Very readily I picked out the bride. Why? Because she was the youngest, prettiest, yes, and saddest looking of the three girls near me—sad, I thought quite naturally, at leaving the gentle, sweet-looking lady who held her hand. I knew she was her mother. There were two young gentlemen, but which of them was the happy one I could not, to save me, decide. "I shall find out," I said, "when the train leaves and the good-byes are given."

Another member of the party I must mention. A beautiful, bright-eyed little boy of about three years hung around the bride. Frequently, during the half hour they lingered in the car, she would stoop and press her lips to his, and pat his curly head. "Her baby brother," I thought.

Last, but by no means the least important in my eye, was the finest looking old gentleman I ever saw. Sixty years of age I think he might have been. Proudly erect, very dignified, yet as gentle-mannered as a woman. I must own to a great admiration for handsome elderly men, and this one was just my beau ideal of the nobleman of olden

times. He must be her father," I said to myself, when the shrill whistle announced the moment for parting near.

The bride was clasped in her mother's arms; the young friends were crowding around for the last kiss, and then my ears were surprised by these words: "Good-bye, my darling boy; be very good, and mamma will bring you something pretty, and will soon be home again." And the child was clasped to the bosom of her I had thought his sister. His mother! Scarcely possible. How can that be? I wondered. Then the old gentleman caught up the little child, and kissing him, said:

"Be a little man, Harry: do not worry for mamma, and"—here there was a slight hesitancy—"papa will find something to bring you too."

At the concluding part of this remark, the beautiful face of the bride was crimsoned for a second, and then became very pale. I fancied a tear gathering in her blue eye. Another whistle, the friends hurried out, leaving the bride, and—which? her father or husband? I was mystified truly. They occupied the seat just in front of me—the handsome old gentleman and the beautiful girl.

How should I manage to satisfy my curiosity? A bright thought entered my mind.

At one of the way stations, many of the gentlemen were going out for a cup of coffee or some refreshments. Among them went the one before me. Leaning over, I touched the arm of the young girl, and said:

"I have the morning papers; perhaps you would like to see them, or possibly your father."

"My husband—he is," she said; and another flush crimsoned her cheeks.

I had been successful—gained the knowledge I desired so much.

"Is there anything of much interest?" she asked.

"Not much except the steamer 'Dawn' has just arrived, bringing in some of the passengers from the ship 'Onward,' which has been missing for four years nearly. It seems this vessel was wrecked off the coast of Borneo, and most of those on board saved, some few only dying from the exposure and suffering. Here is a list of those returned," I answered, and handed her over the paper pointing at the same time to the names.

She grasped the paper. Her breath came quick and short, showing great agitation. She glanced over a few names, and then turning deathly pale, gasped:

"God help me!"

The paper fell from her hands. I thought her about fainting, and quickly handed her my sal ammonia. With a powerful effort, she obtained a little composure, and thanking me, said in a tremulous voice:

"I—found the name of a friend—" She stopped short, and pressing her hands to her breast, seemed again terribly agitated.

Just then her husband returned, bringing two cups of really delicious coffee.

He noticed her paleness, and anxiously inquired the cause.

She murmured something about "tired and faint" and taking one of the cups from his hand, hastily drank the contents. The other one he politely insisted I should take.

We were on the night train, and pretty soon the passengers began to show unmistakable signs of sleepiness. The old gentleman, passing his arms around his wife, drew her head down on his broad breast, and having made her as comfortable as possible, was himself soon lost in slumber.

I feel quite sure sleep never visited her eyes that night. I could plainly see the convulsive heaving of her bosom, hear the half-drawn sighs, and once or twice a half-sup-

pressed groan escaped her pale lips. She was evidently struggling with some great sorrow. The last I saw of them was on the boat crossing the ferry to New York.

Numberless were my surmises concerning those two who had interested me so deeply—all in vain, I thought, for I shall never know the truth, or be any wiser than now.

Years passed on until last summer, I was spending a few weeks at a celebrated watering-place. The weather was intensely hot, and crowds of the residents from the neighboring city and towns sought our cool, healthy resort by the seaside. Among the new-comers who were promenading the long gallery, was one whose face was strangely familiar. But for some time I could not recall where or when I had seen it before.

At last all was clear. 'Twas the beautiful girl—the wife of the old gentleman, my traveling companions of three years before.

She had changed very much, although still very beautiful—looked many years older. She still bore the look of sadness. Yet with this there was an expression of peace and content.

She was leaning on the arm of a fine-looking young man and holding her hand was a handsome boy of about six years, whom I immediately recognized as the little one who had clung so closely to his mother's side years before.

“Where was the old gentleman, her husband? And what was this one to her? I wondered.

That evening at the tea-table, I was seated quite near them. I could not keep my eyes off of her. At length, glancing down the table, she met my earnest gaze. Intently for a moment she looked at me. Then a smile of recognition passed over her face. And as I arose to leave the room, she spoke quickly to her companion. She left her seat, and advanced to meet me. Extending her hand, she said :

"I am so glad to meet you again. I have thought of you often. You were very kind to me during those hours of terrible suffering. Tell me your name; I want to introduce you to my husband—my boy's father."

I told her my name. She said, "Here, Arthur," to the gentleman who was now approaching where we stood. He came forward, and she presented Mr. Lester, saying:

"This is the lady I have told you of, Arthur; she who gave me the first news of your safety."

The next morning after breakfast she came forward, and said:

"Come to my room; I want to talk with you. Arthur is going out with Harry, and we shall have an hour or two to ourselves."

I gladly acquiesced. When we were seated, she said:

"Three years ago you saw me suffering the greatest anguish I have ever known. I have had much to bear since, but that night's agony never can be equalled again. I am going to tell you all about it, for I know well how deeply you were interested in me then and are still.

"My father was a government clerk; I his only child. We lived comfortably, but up to every cent of his income—our only dependence. Papa had a very dear friend, General ——. He was an old bachelor, high in position and very wealthy. When I was eighteen, mamma came to me one day and said that General —— had asked papa to give me to him—he wished to make me his wife. I was always very fond of papa's friend, but never dreamed of such a thing as his loving me other than as the daughter of his old schoolmate. Mamma spoke of what advantages such a marriage would give me, and added, papa would be pleased if I could be happy with the General. But they neither of them tried to induce me to act in opposition to the dictate of my own heart.

“I could not for a moment think of such a union. My heart was already out of my own keeping. I had met and become very much in love with a young lieutenant in the volunteer service.

“Papa was very much opposed to this suitor—not on account of any personal difficulty; but he said that we should at least wait until the war was over, for a soldier’s fate was far too uncertain. Oh! if I had only listened and obeyed his will, I should neither have suffered so terribly myself, nor caused others so much sorrow. Four years before you met me, I eloped and married my present husband. Dear kind papa forgave and received me back to heart and home. A few months more and Arthur was badly wounded, and after lingering in the hospital some months was discharged—his health so impaired, his constitution broken down so completely as to render him totally unfit for almost every kind of business. His physicians recommended a sea voyage. He succeeded in getting a position on a vessel bound for China. A few weeks after the birth of Harry he sailed. I was dreadfully grieved at this parting; but this was only the beginning of my sorrows.

“Two months after, papa died suddenly, leaving us almost destitute—only Arthur’s pension and very small income which he was then receiving. Before another year had passed, there came the terrible news of the loss of the ship in which my husband had sailed. A home-bound vessel had seen and recognized the wreck. All the passengers were believed lost. Now real poverty was actually before us. Through our true friend the General, I obtained a position under the Government, and continued for over two years; my health suffering severely from the constant confinement to my duties. Three years from the time of Arthur’s departure, the General came to me, and said:

“‘My dear child, *I see you feel that you are slowly, but*

surely dying from this confinement at your work. Your boy will soon be an orphan indeed, if you do not get relief. I would, oh so gladly! take you under my own care; but the hard, cruel world would censure unless you give me the perfect right. I know your heart is with the dead; but come to me, Annie, and I do not fear but in time you will return a little of the great love I give you."

"I felt the truth of all he said. I saw my mother too suffering for almost the necessities of life. I knew how much this union would bring to comfort her. I yielded—and the day you first saw me, became his wife.

"You brought to my mind the great horror of my position that day! I beheld myself the wife of two living men! God only knows what I suffered. I could not tell the General then, but bore all alone my agony.

"When we arrived in New York, the General found that he had left his very valuable cane on the ferry-boat. Placing me in the carriage, he hastened back to recover it. He left me, strong, hopeful, and happy. When next I beheld him he was in the arms of strangers—crushed, dying. When I became sufficiently conscious to hear the truth, they told me he had recovered his cane, and was just about stepping off the boat as she pushed away from the wharf. He jumped, fell in the water, at the same time receiving a terrible blow, the effect from which he was then dying. No hopes were offered by any of the physicians. He lived only long enough to care and provide for me, then passed calmly away. Heaven knows how sincerely I grieved for my best friend's death. But you cannot censure, when I tell you of the burden of horror, grief, and mortification which was removed from my mind and heart.

"A few days more, and I returned to my mother—to meet another great shock. Oh, were my sorrows never to cease? I thought.

“There I learned that Arthur, on arriving in New York, had hastened on to his loved ones. Taking up a paper, he read the announcement of the marriage of his wife. Wild with grief and disappointment, he made his way to my home, secured my little Harry, and left for where no one knew. How I lived the next year I hardly know. Truly widowed and childless, I cared not for life, yet still lived on. Fourteen months had rolled by, and no tidings of my boy. One day I sat with my head bowed on my clasped hands, my heart yearning and aching for my lost love, my darling Harry, when I heard a sweet infant voice calling, ‘Mamma, my mamma!’

“But I had so often before heard the same, both in dreams and vain imagining, that I heeded it not. Again louder and more distinct the call.

“I raised my eyes, and—oh! joy unspeakable!—beheld my darling standing beside me; close behind him, Arthur, my husband. The next day we were reunited—all the past clearly understood and freely forgiven.

“Now, my friend, you have my sad story, with its happy conclusion. Yes, we are very happy. But both have suffered too much ever to be again merry or very light-hearted. I fully recognized all my sufferings as the fruits and reward of my disobedience. Had I obeyed my dear father’s will, these sorrows could not have been mine. But now I feel that God has forgiven, and is once more blessing me with his mercy.”

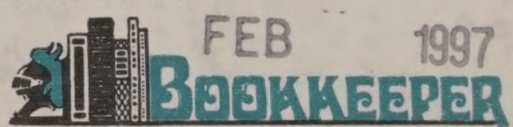
Mrs. Lester ceased. I thanked her for her confidence. And then began a friendship between us which I trust will last as long as life.

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THE END.



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